

FLOWERS *of the* CLOISTER

SISTER MARY WILFRID LAMOTTE



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FLOWERS OF THE CLOISTER

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BY

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SISTER OF LORETTO AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS,
LORETTO MOTHER-HOUSE, MARION COUNTY,
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TO

My Dear Mother

WHOSE LOVE FOR ME BEGAN WITH MY LIFE AND WILL
LAST, I TRUST, THROUGHOUT ETERNITY, THESE
VERSES ARE AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

The Author

FOREWORD

IT is a fact in the history of Christian art that whether it has found expression under the form of music, painting, sculpture, architecture, or poetry, the Sanctuary and Cloister have ever been its inspiration and shelter.

God's truth has blossomed with hue and ray divine where the altar-lamp of faith has burned most brightly. For art without God is a meaningless and empty thing, making no appeal to the spiritual within us.

Because of this, all Christian art is touched with the infinite. It addresses the soul in terms of the infinite. It is a very breath, or aspiration, mounting up to the throne of God, whence is showered the seedling of every precious gift and where is found the type of all beauty.

The writer of these poems, happily titled "Flowers of the Cloister," has, as a good and gifted Religious, dwelt with God for many years. In God and His holiness her noble

soul has grown. The poems which Sister Mary Wilfrid, best known by her pen name of "Balbus"—a Religious of the Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross—has written from time to time are a record of soul-growth, set to the beauteous harmony of God's truth and love.

Busy indeed are the hearts and hands of the religious women, who within our convent walls guide and instruct and mold our Catholic womanhood. Yet do they find time to add to the sum and wealth of Christian art, now in poem, now in essay, now in sweet and subtle setting of song.

Shut out from the world and shunning its glare and light, they seek not that their work should be known of men. So in the Catholic literary toil of this country we Catholics are apt to forget that we have had a Sister Rita of St. Mary's Academy, Notre Dame, Ind., a Sister Borromeo ("Carlo Milanis") of St. Clara's College, Sinsinawa Mound, Wis., and a Sister Francis de Sales ("Edsekas") of Visitation Academy, Evanston, Ill., a trinity of Religious that have

added to the wealth and grace of the Catholic literature of this country.

Sister Wilfrid's "Flowers of the Cloister" will, I am sure, add to this wealth and grace of Catholic letters. Her poems, dealing with no vexed problems or deep heart searchings, are full of beauteous reflection and are ever keyed to Catholic truth. They are a very breath, a fragrant breath from that garden of culture and prayer, the Loretto Mother-House, Loretto, Ky., hallowed by a century of sacred keeping.

THOMAS O'HAGAN.

"The New World,"
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FLOWERS OF THE CLOISTER

GOD

DEPTHS to Thee are shallowness,
Heights but lowly things,
Richest growth but barrenness,
Blasts like birdling wings.
Human love like zephyr's sigh,
Perfumed, transient, sweet,—
Friendship like the passing by
Of happy hours, too fleet.

Power to Thee is impotence,
Dignities all show,
Knowledge childish ignorance,
Genius feeble glow.
Deeps mighty as a little drop,
The sky a simple arch,
The world itself a ball to stop,
When Time shall cease its march.

Man beside Thy greatness seems
A heap of worthless dust,
A creature subject to extremes,
E'en angels cannot trust.
By Thy infinitude how small,
This creature doth appear;
O God magnificent, our All,
Let love exceed our fear!

I LOVE THEE, LORD

I LOVE Thee, Lord, because Thou art perfection,

There never can be fault, nor flaw in Thee;
Thou art my heart's first, last, and sole election,
My choice for time and for eternity.

Thou dost not turn away when I approach
Thee

With heedless words, and weakly wavering
will,

Thou dost not, with harsh speech, rebuke,
reproach me,

I love Thee, Lord, for Thou art patient still.

Bright things on earth are but the emanations
Of Thy transcendent beauty from on high;

Can we allow these fair, but frail creations
To captivate the heart, as charm the eye?

Age cannot come to mar Thy heavenly beauty,
Disease had never power over Thee;

Death *once* for Thee performed his solemn duty;
Thou liv'st and reign'st now eternally.

I love Thee, Lord, because Thy heart is
burning,

With a rare love for me—Thy abject child;
Oh! may I always love for love returning,
Be never more by earthly loves beguiled.

Some hearts complain of often being lonely;
Do they not know that Thou art ever near?
Ah! if they thought about and loved Thee
only,
How sweet the words of comfort they should
hear.

I love the good in creatures, but perfection
Is no where else, O Heart, except in Thee!
I fain would, like Thee, grow, my soul's elec-
tion,
Teach me the way—I listen eagerly.

When doubt and darkness o'er my pathway
lower,
When sadness casts a veil about my soul,
I turn to Thee, and with Thy wondrous power
Thou bid'st the shadows quickly backward
roll.

O, Friend of friends! How blest is the assurance,

That Thou can'st not forget, betray, nor fail;

Through endless ages hath Thy love endurance,

What matter if the lamps of earth grow pale?

Among the pilgrims daily upward climbing,

None seem so frail, and prone to fall, as I;

Yet, like them, for the happy goal I'm pining,

To Thy strong Heart I lift a pleading cry.

Dost hear me, Lord? Send aid unto my weakness,

Reject me not, though I call oft again;

Teach my poor heart the lesson of Thy meekness,

Thou knowest that I love Thee, Lord.—

Amen.

CHRISTMAS SCENE

ANGELS, stars, and blended tints above,
Loud music rolling from the opal dome;
In cave, a youthful mother, earth's fair Dove,
Giving to Child divine a mortal home.
Two lowly animals, a meek-faced man,
Rough-mantled shepherds, with their bleating gifts:
Our Christmas picture, since Christ's life began,
The scene, that yearly Christian heart uplifts.

VENITE

FLOATING to earth on the autumn breeze,
A leaf in silence fell,
Cast from some bough on the frosted trees;
Its home no man can tell.
Yet its dainty face in rich color vied,
With flower-cup drooping near;
In shaded crimson and gold hues dyed,
That leaf spoke love and cheer.

Coming to earth on an angel's wing,
Toward Nazareth long ago,
Peace and good will for time to bring
Fell blossom as pure as snow.
The Lily of Israel there embraced
This blossom of love divine,
While the vault of heaven was angel-faced
And glittered like noonday's shine.

Bethlehem's hill—a shadowed cave,
Where cattle meekly fed,
Old Mother Earth to her Master gave
For His straw-lined manger bed.

High stars blazed forth—the angels sang,
The shepherds came, heart pure,
And the tiny form slumbered free from pang,
In trusting love secure.

Winds may wander and leaves may fall,
Their fate unknown remain,
But a Father's care hath concern for us all,
For Him each shall live again.
We may gather about the low-thatched roof,
As leaves from the world's cold blast;
Christ's Heart will give us some tender proof
That He knows we have come at last.

AGES HAVE PASSED

AGES have passed since the Bethlehem cave
To Mary and Joseph a poor shelter gave;
Ages since Jesus, a straw-cradled child,
Upon His young mother first humanly smiled.
Ages have passed since the heavens in love
Opened wide portals, while choirs above
Earthward sent melody, potent to thrill
Men's hearts with the promise of peace and
good will.

Ages have passed, yet that song seems as sweet,
As when lowly shepherds the angels did greet;
The Baby-King still joyfully homage receives
From each loving heart, from each spirit
that believes.

Men now with angels the Gloria sing,
Earth-bells like golden harps joyously ring,
Innocent little ones hasten to find
The Infant of Bethlehem, gentle and kind.

Ages have passed, still the same opal skies
Look kindly toward earth with the same
 starry eyes,
Which lighted that Christmas at Bethlehem
 old,
When the heaven-planned tableau Christ's
 story first told.
So shall the ages eternal appear,
A restful, a blissful, an unending year,
With Bethlehem joys and fair scenes of the
 past,
Enshrined in a heavenly tableau to last.

CHRISTMAS STARS

O LOVELY stars, so radiant, silent, calm,
Sailing yon opal sea,
Be heralds of a soul's all healing balm,
Coming full soon to me.
Whatever thorns hath hardened the year past,
To wound my spirit sore,
May under Jesus' Crib be quickly cast,
Their sharpness felt no more.

O lovely stars, each Christmas seems more
sweet,
Since that of new-born hopes,
When your bright cohorts and your legions
fleet,
Wheeled over Bethlehem's slopes,
And stole with silent ray, where slept the
Child,
To claim Him as your king,
Heedless of wintry cold, or tempest wild,
Silent, while angels sing.

O Christmas stars, thro' ages still unchanged,
How we should love your light;
Never from track assigned hath one orb ranged,
Nor failed to cheer earth's night.
Teach me the lesson of your faithful love,
For that dear Babe divine,
Hold this rash spirit, ever prone to rove,
Close to the Manger-Shrine.

“ EARTH'S CHRISTMAS FLOWER ”

A DAINTY Bud from fair, celestial clime,
Hath found its way to earth,
And One whose age exceeds the lapse of time
Submits to mortal birth.

A tiny Infant, sleeping on rough straw,
Warmed by a mother's smile,
Is One before whom angels bend in awe,
One, free from Satan's guile.

Lo! Majesty all sweetly helpless lies,
Without a crown—unknown.
Bright angel courtiers, chanting from the
skies,
His Gloria intone.

O cold, sad earth! seest not the waxen Flower,
That seeks, for thee, to bloom?
'Tis come, at last, the long expected hour,
Yet still thou sleep'st in gloom.

This fragile Blossom meets a ready hand,
To clasp It and secure,
Mary is there and near doth Joseph stand,
Both loving, humble, pure.
The fragrance of the heavenly Bloom they
hail,
Expanding 'neath their eyes,
And noting not how earthly comforts fail,
They kneel in rapt surprise.

O tender Flower, sweet, immortal Balm!
Asleep in lowly bed,
To stormy earth Thou bring'st a wondrous
calm,
Afar Thy fragrance shed.
The eastern star-ray knows where Thou art
hid,
Leads crowned-heads to Thy side;
Send to our hearts a guiding ray and bid
Them sing glad Christmastide!

“WHAT WILL THE NEW YEAR
BRING?”

WE know the stars and flowers that bright-
ened life,

During the twelve months past;

We know the outward storms, the inward
strife,

That lowered, but did not last.

We do not know what ray may light the path,

What flowers deck the way;

What smiles may gladden, or frowns kindle
wrath

In the oncoming day.

Vicissitude our lot must ever be

While seasons change below,

Tho' seeming stern, 'tis God's all-wise decree,

Lest we our Heaven forego.

What matter if no sybil's voice make known

Our future joy or grief;

What matter if our harvests have outgrown

The ripening of the sheaf?

What will the New Year bring? God's daily
sun.

His soft moon-ray at night;

Some darkness, then the sky; stars, one by
one:

Years fruitful,—then a blight.

From our heart-circle, perhaps, a bitter loss,

Some new friends in the void;

Some sweet success before a heavy cross;—

No pleasure unalloyed.

We may expect each new year to repeat

Life's many-colored tale,

So will this twelve months be for us replete,

Nor tears, nor smiles prevail.

And all the year its meed of joy will hold,

With kind, soul-tempering cares,

Each day God's tender mercies will unfold,

In answer to our prayers.

BLESSINGS OF A YEAR

IS IT a little thing that we behold,
The culmination of another year?
What is the story that can now be told
Of twelve bright months, so far and yet so
near?

They seem so far, because the running tide
Of Time, swift passes from our eager view;
They seem so near, because we still confide
In promises each season did renew.

Vanished they are, however they appear,
But what they brought may yet with us
remain.

The part we gave to God, His records bear,
His balance sheets show every loss and
gain.

Which is the longer column; which reveals
The hidden springs, that move our daily
course?

Is it regret, that o'er our spirit steals?
Is it full tide of joy, or dull remorse?

Each perished month left records of its own,
Which memory's lens enables us to read;
Along the vista, blessings hardly known,
Arise reproachful, till our poor hearts bleed.
Such bounteous blessings!—Many a golden
sun
Lighted long days, for us both glad and
sweet;
So many moons, their silvery paths have run,
And many friends, our hearts rejoice to
meet.

So many birds have warbled to our ears,
So many flowers blossomed by the way,
So many kindly acts have dried our tears,
So many blest suggestions made us pray.
While to our inward lives hath God assigned,
With liberal hand, meet succor for each
hour;
Full oft He tried us, then with love refined,
Removed the cross, tho' tis our rightful
dower.

Such is the story of the year just passed,
Alive and grateful, we another face;

What doth it bring us? A day to be our last?

No day will come devoid of God's strong
grace.

Another year! We gladly consecrate

Each hour God kindly adds unto our store;

Another year bearing its precious freight

Of joys and woes is knocking at my door.

TO FEBRUARY

ONE of twelve sisters, yet no poet sings
Thy charms, O February, Time's grey
child;
Before thee, New Year opens; wild March
brings,
At thy departure, hope of seasons mild;
This the harsh verdict of a northern clime.
But there are other lands, where thou dost
smile;
Where flowers and birds and children hail
the time
Of thy sweet coming. Many an ocean isle
And broad expanse of prairie, gemmed by
thee,
Lift flowery faces to a blue-flecked sky,
And lonely mariners, on rolling sea,
Dream of bright homestead, they perforce
must fly.
Whichever way a Christian's footsteps tend,
For him, thou hast a picture, old, but fair;

Of Maiden Mother, and her espoused friend.
Who meekly doth the poor man's offering
bear,

Of aged Simeon, with weak arms aloft,
Chanting his death-song, full of holy joy,
And sainted Anna, in a tone dove-soft,
Murmuring glad welcome home to Mary's
boy.

THE PURIFICATION

GOD'S lovely things—a Mother, Child, two
doves,

With lowly mien ascend the Temple stair;
A meek attendant, whom the Virgin loves,
In dream ecstatic doth her burdens share.
They have had Heaven in Bethlehem's dewy
cave,

Have heard for forty days the angels sing,
For forty days, no bold intruder—save
The humble shepherd and the eastern king.

Jesus hath made their paradise complete,
With joy beyond that known on earth
before,

Now joy, too, passes, with unconscious feet,
Far, far away from Temple's sacred door.
Anna beholds the Child of priceless worth,
Promised of old to prophet, king and seer,
Simeon, inspired, proclaims Messiah's birth,
And sings of hope fulfilled and death, so
near.

His eye prophetic wakes a minor strain,
He turns toward Mary and her woe fore-
tells;

Her peace and holy calmness still remain,
Tho' in her heart a dark dread henceforth
dwells.

The Babe, close nestled to its Mother's heart,
Goes forth, Redeemer to the human race,
And Mary bows, accepting her stern part,
Tho' foot-prints, dyed in blood, she, too,
must trace.

“VIA CRUCIS”

'TIS darkness now about us, and full slow,
The hours, beside a sleepless pillow, go,
Yet thoughts can wing an unimpeded flight
O'er land and sea by sunlit day or night.
Within a vestibule my spirit soars
And gazes, wistful, thro' the open doors
That lead into a church, where simple art
Depicts the Dolors of our Lady's heart.

The aisle, a vista, lights on either side,
Lead straight to where our Saviour doth
abide.

Above, from fleecy clouds, on ceiling traced,
Look down fair angels, sweetly human-faced.
Below, veiled heads are bent in solemn prayer,
One group all sombre, one all white—to share
Their supplications; younger forms, too, kneel
Lifting, as one, to Heaven, a fond appeal.

The hour for *Via Crucis*; blessed hour,
Commemorating love's all-conquering power,
That brought a cross-bent Victim to the hill
Of Calvary, there His heart's life-blood to
spill

In generous outpourings, from each vein
A crimson flood, souls cleansing from sin
stain.

With prayers compassionate, the priest of God
Passes along the way that Victim trod.

Each figure to my spirit's eye is plain.
I join each prayer, each *Stabat's* sad refrain,
Tho' singing with them, other tones are clear,
And tell whose voice strikes sweetly on mine
ear.

Does no one yet my presence realize?
Must I withdraw, not meeting any eyes
Of recognition? Spirits, who behold!
Return to exile from a flight too bold.

The *Via Crucis* ends. They disappear:
The portal closes—now the scene is drear;
My spirit speeds afar; Sleep's angel sings
And fair home-visions to our slumber brings.

We are content until God's future day
Toward western coast shall clearly point the
way;

Our *Via Crucis* here, not there, must be,
At least till duty calls us o'er the sea.

THE TEMPLE RAISED

A GLORY, not from sun in night-dimmed sky,
Nor whitened moon-ray's sheen;
A flash, which dazzles e'en a soldier's eye,
A form too clearly seen.
The word fulfilled; the Temple full restored,
Three days in ruin laid;
The faithful few again behold their Lord—
Behold him undismayed.

The guard, the stone, the heavy Roman seal,
Retained Him not in tomb;
Disturbing naught, a radiance did reveal,
His passing in the gloom.
Be it to cross, or tomb—true hearts, unknown
An angel will be there,
To say, "Fear not,"—to roll away the stone
Your loving quest to share.

GOD'S CLAIM

OUTSIDE Jerusalem's lofty walls,
With Calvary's height near by,
The measured blow of hammer falls,
Beneath the master's eye,
The chisel deftly chips the stone
To many a quaint design,
Yet he who deems that tomb his own
Shall not therein recline.

Let him those sculptured walls prepare,
And see the slab well placed,
Select the whitest blocks with care,
E'en have his own name traced;
And still a mightier than he
Shall in that tomb be laid;
Yea, Joseph's gift to God will be
Its white sepulchral shade.

Thus do we often plan and build
To give our hearts content,

And when our wishes seem fulfilled,
God's countermand is sent.
Ah! happy we, if He but claim
All that those hearts hold best,
And on the slab which bears no name
Take sweet and tranquil rest.

MARY'S CONQUESTS

HOW many hearts wilt thou conquer this
May,

Mary, our Mother,
Then gently guide them along the safe way,
To Jesus, our brother?
Earth would present but a wilderness drear,
Weak hearts would yield to a well-grounded
fear,
Were not thy presence a beacon to cheer,
Mary, our Mother!

Wonderful beauty and sweetness and bloom,
O dearest Mother,
Rise from the earth, after cold, wintry gloom;
There is no other
Radiant season, like one, earth calls thine,
When the fair star-flowers most sweetly shine,
And gathering bird-choirs gaily combine,
To greet thee, O Mother.

May brings us thoughts of yon Kingdom of
Peace,

Mary, our Mother,

Where festive happiness never shall cease,

And thou still our Mother.

If we prove faithful, our fortune will be,

E'en at the White Throne, acknowledged by
thee,

Thy transfigured beauty forever to see,

And Jesus, our Brother.

MARY, OUR MOTHER

THERE is a word so tender, full and sweet,
The heart re-echoes what the lips repeat,
In tear-dimmed eyes a love-light doth appear,
While music seems to vibrate on the ear.
No tutor needs the artless tongue to teach,
The infant lisps it in his earliest speech,
Hands and bright eyes, the eager tongue fore-
stall

The child in one word, Mother, utters all.

The youth, bewildered on life's lonely way,
The maid, appalled, as clouds rise o'er her day,
The man, unhappy made by envy's frown,
The matron, by a hundred cares, weighed
down,

Feel blest, if like the infant, they may turn
To one true heart, that never child did spurn,
And with fond words, which healing balm
contain,

Sigh "Mother," feeling quick surcease from
pain.

Once lips divine this sacred name entoned,
Allegiance to a human mother owned;
From His hard cross, she was His kind bequest,
Thro' John, to us. Dear Lord, be thou e'er
blest,

For this great privilege! Her care we need,
Her love maternal, prone to intercede
For us, when claim to favor we have none;
To her Thou'lt hearken, for Thou art her
son.

We love thee, Mary, as the queen of May,
Enthroned so high, thro' Heaven's resplendent
day;

We love thee on dark Calvary's shadowed
height,

When grief was thine, and day for thee, as
night,

But conscious oft of hopes and anxious fears,
Thy title, Mother, soothes, sustains, endears;
Reign thou forever in God's land of Rest,
To call thee Mother, suits our exile best.

“MARY IN ROME”

WHEREVER the praises of Jesus are sung,
His Mother hath altars and shrines;
Wherever the bells in God's service are rung,
Our Lady hath harmonized chimes.
With churches by hundreds, the city of Rome
To Mary full eighty has given,
Where pilgrims in prayer feel at peace and at
home,
'Neath the eyes of our Mother in Heaven.

On the spot, heaven-chosen, our Lady of Snow,
Hath temple, enriched from the mine,
From this Esquiline height do her true children
know,
She is pleased that her glory should shine.
Our Lady of Mercy—Our Lady of Grace,
Fair Queen of the angels and men;
Our Lady of Victories, too, hath a place,
Of the Street, of the Vale, of the Glen.

Our Lady of Clemency sweetly appeals,
To hearts by rude passions all torn;
Our Lady of Dolours, for hearts wounded, feels,
Queen of Tears, she consoles those who
mourn.

As Queen of the Mountain, as Lady of Peace,
Our Lady of Prophets—of Souls,
They name her, extol her, ask of her release
From flames her sweet power controls.

Devotion hath many fond titles allowed
To Mary, as Mother and Queen;
While princes of Church and of State have
endowed,

The shrines where her image is seen.
Good peasants, approaching, smile up in her
face,

With the beautiful boldness of love;
While high-born and titled, with modesty's
grace,

Recall the dear Lady above.

In the musical speech of the south men pro-
claim

Every day, every noon, every night,

As a proof of their love, the Immaculate name,
That never knew evil or blight.
And many the record of swift-answered prayer
In this land where true Faith finds a home;
Ah! well would it be, should all Christian
hearts there
Love Mary as men do in Rome.

TO THE SACRED HEART

SO often hath Thy dear Heart been the
theme

Of poet's pen and fervent artist's brush,
Our quiet prayers would perhaps more fitting
seem,

Breathed from the soul, at twilight's solemn
hush.

And yet, and yet, with burning thoughts arise
To claim expression with our human speech,
Tho' when the tongue, with vain endeavor
tries,

It finds no word significant to reach.

Thy heart is human; well it understands
Trite repetitions, murmured oft before,
As eyes glance toward those wounded feet
and hands,

While lips rehearse, "I love Thee more and
more."

Permit us this, while gifted poets sing,

And painters glorify their art for Thee,
It soothes our hearts to say the selfsame
thing

“ I love Thee, Lord, and know Thou lovest
me.”

The glowing tributes and the offerings rare,
Of others, to our souls much joy impart,
And in the donors' happiness we share,
Tho' we have nothing for Thy Sacred Heart.
But, as those Angels serve, who only wait,
About Thy throne, we, casting out all fear,
May enter, one day, at the Golden Gate,
And say, “ I love Thee, Jesus,” Thou wilt
hear.

THERE LIES THE POWER

WITH low-bowed head, before an altar
kneeling,

A priest, discouraged, offered his sad prayer,
His flock, so long devoid of faith and feeling,
Now seemed a burden far too great to bear.
Full of high hopes and zealous for God's glory,
He came into this vineyard years ago,
Had faithful worked, but to repeat the story,
Which other pastors only too well know.

“Dear Lord”—the words tear-choked, arose
full slowly—

“Thy useless servant from his task release:
Give me another, nor care I how lowly,
So it but prosper and my soul find peace.
Thy bitter chalice, I am not refusing,
Yet own myself unfit for this hard strife;
Send hither someone of Thy all-wise choosing,
To save these souls unto eternal life.”

The sunset-splendor into shadows fading,
Found still the priest in suppliance at the
shrine,

His meek humility, e'en God persuading,
Won in response a favor all divine.

A radiant Figure, 'mid the dark appearing,
Showed plaited thorns and fiercely-cleaving
dart;

A voice of music brought these words of
cheering,

"Son, teach thy flock to love my Sacred
Heart."

“AT THE SHRINE OF THE SACRED
HEART”

OF ALL endowments unto nature given,
The noblest part,
Is that, which may be wrung, or wrecked, or
riven,
The human heart.
Yet, Thou, Who all our simple weakness
knowest,
These hearts dost crave;
And wonderful the lengths to which Thou
goest,
E'en one to save.

A tiny bird on casement ledge is singing,
Only for Thee;
All it possesseth to Thy altar bringing,
Thus teaching me.
Light, southern breezes, perfume-laden, enter,
Thy feet to kiss;
Finding in sunny lands no holier centre,
Nor greater bliss.

54 "*At the Shrine of the Sacred Heart*"

A little child approaches, still betraying
 A glad surprise,
To taper, flower, and bird are idly straying
 Her curious eyes.
Yet Thou regardest each with looks all tender,
 And calm repose,
Nor spurnest careless homage that they render,
 Child, bird, and rose.

Charmed by the beauty of Thy tapered altar,
 They linger long;
Nor doth the song, or prayer, one moment
 falter,
 Despite the throng.
Which lov'st Thou best, Lord, child, or bird,
 or flower,
 Unreasoning all,
Yet giving to Thee what is in their power,
 Beyond recall?

Then cometh answer, fraught with heart-felt
 sweetness,
 "Each one is dear;
I care not if their homage lacks completeness,
 So they draw near.

But thou”—reproachful eyes toward me
turning,

“ Do thou thy part,
Respond in full to my unheeded yearning,
Give me thy *heart*.”

TWO WOUNDS

UPON thy brow the hardened thorns they
press,
A gentle sigh alone speaks Thy distress;
Thy shoulder, tho' a crushing weight it bore,
Embraced the burden that would bruise it
sore;
The rough nails fiercely tore Thy tender hands,
To show us how constraining are love's bands;
A spear-point reached Thy Heart; it gave
relief,
The cleansing tide flowed toward a dying thief.

Two marble groups at foot of Holy Stair,
Present the Nazarene, of men most fair,
Towards whose sad face a smiling traitor
bends,
To give the signal to his new-made friends,
With Judas lips—"Betrayest thou with a kiss?
Better a millstone round thy neck than this."
And with such meek reproach He let him go,
Down the dark valley of self-chosen woe.

The other sculptor's lovely thought in stone,
Shows Christ all beautiful, all sad, alone,
Thorn-crowned and purple clad, the King of
shame,

Facing His people; meeting no acclaim.
Then Pilate, wav'ring, wondering, calls aloud,
His "Ecce Homo" to the eager crowd,
But almost quails before the furious cry,
"Let him be crucified: this man must die!"

Than Calvary's bitterness, more bitter far,
Those deep heart-wounds, that show no out-
ward scar.

Laid by a hand oft met in friendly clasp,
A traitor's snare; who can its baseness grasp?
Two wounds, not named among the sacred
five,

Let us then reverence, and daily strive,
By loving reparation to atone
For outraged love His Sacred Heart has known.

“ TWO VOICES ”

WHISPERED the winds from a western sea,
“ There are balmy isles afar,
Their fragrance we bear on our wings for thee,
Who dwell 'neath the eastern star;
There are crested waves on yon restless deep,
Long due on another shore,
They will carry thee on, where our cohorts
sweep,
And thy heart will sigh no more.
Our sails are white and the bark makes speed;
It outrides the ocean bird,
Of craft, or labor, there is no need,
When the shout, advance! is heard.”

And her ear was filled with the witching strain,
As her soul, in trembling, turned
Toward Pleasure's port, but to hear again,
The song for which she yearned.
Then a “ still, small voice ” in accents mild,

Rose sweetly within her heart,
As soft, as the singing of little child,
Yet piercing as arrow's dart.
It sang of Virtue's peaceful realm,
Where sacrifice is sweet,
Where trials come, but cannot o'erwhelm,
Those gathered about Pierced Feet.

PICTURES

WHAT lovely pictures to soul-vision rise!
My fingers long for prompt, artistic skill,
To reproduce for mine and other eyes,
Delineations of the scene, at will.

'Twere sweet to trace such features, as we
dream,
Were Mary's, while on earth; the Infant
charms
Of Jesus; on St. Joseph's face the beam
Of bliss, while Babe lay slumbering in his
arms.

We may imagine Nazareth's fair Boy,
Beside the column in the Temple hall;
Meeting His mother's eye, with unfeigned joy,
Yielding obedience to her gentle call.

Then on that homeward journey, faces three,
Brightened with morning ray, or westward
glow,

Turned to the upper world, as if to see,
 Were blessedness, e'en there *they* did not
 know.

Around the shop, within the house, at play,
 Seeking, with thoughtful love, His mother's
 side,
 How oft she cared not, if 'twere night, or
 day—
 In that bright Presence, all times glorified.

Ah! vain the effort! artist ne'er can reach
 The skill to trace those lineaments divine;
 Content we must be, till the soul's eyes teach
 The faultless beauty Art cannot define.

THE BRIDE'S VOW

SHE cometh fairer than the morning rose,
With pearly dew-drops bright;
Upon her brow a holy radiance glows,
Her step is true and light.
Like first unsullied snow, her robe, her soul,
With maiden smile and blush,
She now appeareth in an untried role,
Amid the temple's hush.

Some eyes are saddened, knowing they will
lose

The passing, graceful form,
The joy she doth about the hearth diffuse,
Will missing be next morn.
Yet she is happy; love hath softened pain,
She goeth forth a bride;
The home must seek no longer to retain
Its joy, its hope, its pride.

Her choice is made; her willing lips have said
The holy marriage vow;

A happy prisoner is she gently led,
By one, who claims her now.
Claims her till death; her solemn word is
 given;
She feeleth inward peace;
She knoweth vows are registered in heaven,
She asketh no release.

O sweet, fair Bride! May blessings be thy
 dower,
And sunshine, as to-day,
Avert the blight of discontent's dark power,
From thy still hallowed way!
Bear with life's ills; make lighter others' load:
Let love attune thy tongue;
Thy footsteps long may linger on the road,
Yet keep thy pure heart young.

THE NUN'S VOWS

O LORD, dear Lord, behold me at Thy feet,
While years are few and life appeareth
sweet,

Yet conscious that the shining world can give
Nor joy, nor treasure, that fore'er shall live.
No lowering shadow hath my path o'erspread,
No dark foreboding yet awakened dread;
The vista of the future seemeth bright,
And still my heart desires holier light.

I want Thee, Lord. No creature else can
fill

The inner void; no other voice can thrill,
In low-toned music, floating on white waves,
As when the sea, a sun-parched shore line
bathes.

It might have brought content, at least, in
part,

To rest mine own upon another heart,

And quaff sweet draughts of human love, all
pure,
Save for the thought—how long will this
endure?

Thus grew the yearning for some higher prize,
Some pledge of love and hope, which never
dies,
A bond secure, unfailing as Thy word;
None such could give, save only Thee, dear
Lord.

The voice of pleasure chanted in the vale.
The song of triumph echoed on the gale,
Domestic joy in winning accents called,
But none of these reclaimed a soul once
thrall'd

By chains of Thine. The weakness, sin and
woe,
Thou found'st in me, did not my claim forego,
With a l the misery, a hope was there;
I turned to Thee; Thou didst not spurn my
prayer.
Gladness, this hour, doth in my soul hold
sway,

I'm Thine, dear Lord, and will be Thine alway,
Oh! that my words could summon to Thy
 shrine,
Young hearts, more fervent, purer far, than
 mine!

Thy chains are golden, with a clasp em-
 pearled,
They guard me from a cold and dangerous
 world,
Each link is welded by the Hand of Love,
Annealed to strength by seraph flames above.
I feel protection in each lightsome bond,
And tender care, and peace, all else beyond,
Content am I, Thy gracious Will allows,
My lips to speak, today, my holy Vows.

TO OUR GRADUATES

UPON life's broad, white beach,
Somewhere,
There is a chosen spot for each,
Somewhere,
The post where each must work with zest,
The place where each will show her best,
The only place your hearts may rest,
Mankind your friends and God you guest;
Somewhere, somewhere.

This favored spot, how find,
Somewhere?
With tasks allotted, place assigned,
Somewhere?
Ah, who can tell! Hope moves in sight,
Ask Heaven for guidance, strength, and light;
Apply each faculty with might,
Be simple, fond, sincere—all will come right,
Not here? Well, There.

OUR FUTURES

JUST leave them to God. Do not stop to
portray

The woes or the joys of the on-coming day;
Weep not o'er the trials, that soon may occur,
And never, thus fearing, one duty defer.

Ne'er darken your sunshine with prospect of
clouds,

Spoil not your bright smile with a sneer that
enshrouds;

Check not your laughter's all musical flow,
By dreading a morrow, full-freighted with woe.

Stoop not your shoulders 'neath crosses un-
seen,

Shrink not from ordeals that never have
been;

Believe not that others intend to destroy
The blessings and gifts, which are yours to
enjoy.

Hedge round your ears to the murmurer's
speech,
Let no false counsel your inner heart reach;
Borrow no trouble, that God does not send—
Will not His providence last to the end?

Our closely-veiled future God only can see:
He plans it, directs it, still leaving us free;
And wise is the soul that e'er simply confides
In the love that is truest, and always abides.
Then hearken no longer to prophets of ill,
But rejoice that our King can each promise
fulfil;
Should a cross come, accept it, and smilingly
bear
The burden, that makes us to Jesus more dear.

BECAUSE I LOVE THEE

GOD give thee happiness. I cannot bear
To think of sorrow coming soon anear,
To thy dear heart. My love would fain enfold
Thy future, lest it bitter trials hold.
Yet, well I know in exile thou dost dwell,
And must encounter what none can expel,
Nor do I pray no cross may come to thee,
For then, no crown thy heritage could be.

I ask for thee content. No other gift,
Can every mundane shadow gently lift,
Nor every cloud, which saddens, blow away,
To make of circling hours a perfect day.
My hope is that thou e'er mayst cherish right,
And never find in evil false delight;
No lofty fabric of ambition rear,
To darken thy best days with anxious fear.

Take no rash steps upon an unknown road,
Lest wandering feet should lead thee far from
God;

No secret give to friends of recent date;
Thou might'st regret thy folly when too late.
But let thy tender pity make thee kind,
To all, for all some inward misery find;
A friendly eye, a gentle word ne'er miss,
To cover o'er some human grief with bliss.

Because I love thee I would have thee learn
That pure unselfishness, which doth confirm
The placid joy, another's weal imparts,
The peace known but to true, unselfish hearts.
God give thee happiness, until the close,
Of earth's career, whose length no mortal
knows;
God give thee hope, e'en when thou'rt sore
distressed;
Because I love thee I would see thee blest.

MY FRIEND AFAR

STRANGE mystery! that she who walked
this road,
And held my hand, while reading thoughts
and heart,
Should be residing now in yon abode,
From all that sweetened life, so far apart.
Once did our paths lie near; vicissitudes
Came unto each and closer drew the ties,
Which bound us to each other; death intrudes;
Alas! in tranquil sleep my dear friend lies.

The sleep I see and partly understand,
Yet one fact marvelous my being thrills,
That she should dwell in yonder, unknown
land,
With bliss endowed, which every longing
fills.
So strange it seems that she, beyond those
skies,
Amid a dazzling throng, with fearless gaze

Uplifts the tender love-light of her eyes
To God's great throne, engirt with seraph
rays.

What secrets hath she fathomed of the Real,
Instead of empty dream in mortal space?
What revelations, e'en for spirits, seal,
Those joys ecstatic, which earth-joys re-
place?

What I am saying, thinking, she may know,
As God permits, tho' nought to me is given,
Of how celestial torrents for her flow
To make the untold happiness of Heaven.

Too heavy are we with life's vexing care,
And human loves, and waiting phantom
ships,

To soar so high, nor durst we ask to share
The cup so sweet, prepared for perfect lips.
That Land, her home, no longer doth appear,
So far. I wonder if she can forget
The dear, old life spent in this lower sphere,
The golden ties—strong ties, not sundered
yet.

'MID NODDING LILIES

STOOD a child, by green bank playing,
Conning o'er some quaint child-saying,
Singing songs, from heart o'erflowing,
Pure and happy, yet scarce knowing,
Why those songs e'er upward floated,
As from bird, for music throated,
Knowing not all hearts are happy,
'Mid pure, nodding Lilies.

Stood a maiden robed, all whiteness,
Radiant, pure, where shone the brightness,
And the splendor; flowers rarest,
Deck the hall; to her, the fairest,
Were the blossoms, mem'ry cherished,
For the sake of childhood perished,
When she stood by green bank, happy,
'Mid fair, nodding Lilies.

Lowly now the maiden lying,
Heareth not our sad hearts sighing,
Knoweth not how we are weeping,

Thus to find her sweetly sleeping.
Still we feel she passed untainted,
Thro' a world so darkly painted,
And her joy-song still is chanted,
'Mid unfading Lilies.

MORNING

A SCATTERING of mist-wreaths in far-off
spaces,

A gentle radiance from the blushing east;
The zephyrs, singing matins in most places,

A freshness, as the herald of a feast.
The air, well freighted with the chaliced trea-
sures

Of perfumed flower-land, breathing night's
farewell;

Soft, bird-note music, in rare, fitful measures,
The day's awaking to the world all tell.

Each ghostly figure on the hillside looming,
By slow degrees its outline doth reveal;
Where darkness was, we see the flower bloom-
ing,

Its colors brightening, as beams nearer steal.
The opal arch its diamond studs is losing,
And whiteness spreads the dull grey con-
cave o'er;

The early bee its nectar-cup is choosing,
Ere swift-winged rivals rob the honeyed
store.

In silence shy, my Lady Day advances,
Seeking her azure robe of ample fold,
To eastward turning smiles and radiant
glances,
Where roseate hues fast blend with rays of
gold.

A burst of music and a burst of glory,
Meet in ethereal realms above our world,
To human ears, they tell the old, old story,
God's love—the banners of the morn un-
furled.

SEPTEMBER

GOLDEN hues and crimson glory
Tell the oft-repeated story,
Of the year's maturity;
Now the fruit boughs, richly laden,
Tempt the eye of lad and maiden,
With ripe freight, most fair to see.

Blossoms bright with brown nut blended,
Speak of summer, scarcely ended,
And of autumn, just begun;
Then we realize completeness
Added to the summer's sweetness,
Signet of God's work well done.

Well for us now to remember,
Mid ripe glories of September,
What should be our lives in prime;
Buds of promise in full flower,
Virtues fruitful for soul's dower,
Hope of Heaven's unwintered clime.

SEPTEMBER SONG

WHITHER so fast, O brown and golden
leaves?

It is not time to fall:

But lately, wheat was bound in golden sheaves,
And even yet the white dove, cooing, grieves—
Look! rose-blooms on our wall.

Where wert thou, maiden, as the summer
sped?

Were its bright days so sweet?

Still have their flower-crowned hours swiftly
fled;

Our verdant legions now lie crisp and dead,
E'en 'neath thy wayward feet.

Once in our spring-time glory high we waved,

Kissed by the perfumed air;

Now with our varied beauty is th' woodland
paved;

Be our best lesson on thy heart engraved,
Maiden, as yet, so fair.

OCTOBER

IN NUT-BROWN garments, trimmed with scar-
let splendor,
Decay and bloom in silent conflict rife;
Night's chilly dew and morning mists all
tender,
October, thou art typical of life

The songsters seem to feel at wondrous leisure,
Their wheeling flocks choose eve, not morn,
for play,
With food outspread almost inviting seizure,
Their ready beaks attack the crawling prey.

With nest-recruits this bird-world swells its
numbers
To armies, pinioned for a southern flight,
While hardier creatures dream of lengthened
slumbers,
When snows shall make for them an arctic
night.

In rich abundance ripened fruits are glowing,
Nut clusters harden and soon grow mature;
The vintage wealth seems almost past our
knowing,
The floral tribe too lovely to endure.

Ephemeral, bounteous, fair, this is thy story,
October, with thy gold and coral hues,
So, too, doth life present some transient glory,
And cheat us with its quick, dissolving
views.

But thou hast merit, for 'tis thy supplying
Doth fill the bin and heap our winter's
store,
So may our autumn life on earth low lying,
Heap treasures we may bear to Heaven's
door.

PURGATORY

O SEA of flame-tipped waves,
With soul-barks tossing on thy fiery
beach;
Hark to the prayer that saves—
Send exiles to the shores they long to reach!

Lower thy wrathful crests,
Earth raises showers of prayer to cool their
heat,
Above the smile of Mary rests,
While friends below and angel hosts entreat.

NOVEMBER DAYS

TO HUMAN thinking 'tis a lonely time,
When nature sheds her lustre at the
tomb;

But faith hath calculations more sublime;
When good ariseth, it dispels the gloom.
And good is done, although the sky be dark,
'Mong exiles from the peaceful, heavenly
court,
Who lie in flames and gently eager, hark
To summons from the true, celestial port.

They know themselves unworthy yet to rise,
To heights where blissful souls find peaceful
rest,

Yet toward that exit ever turn their sighs,
Not theirs to reach, while still by debt
oppressed.

Helpless for self, each pilgrim begs for aid,
And toward the earthly home expectant
turns;

Who can refuse? till the last farthing paid,
The ransomed soul no more in torment
burns.

Blessed the Church, whose mother-hand ex-
tends,

Her wondrous power to lessen penal fires,
Who e'en beyond the grave her favor sends,
Which eases pain and holy hope inspires.
So let us prize these dark, November days,
Because they open oft the Gates of Light,
To swell the chorus of eternal praise
Thro' Heaven's day, which closeth not in
night.

LESSON OF THE GOOD

O H! THERE shine lights from overhanging
skies,

With glittering effulgence, tho' afar;

We care not what their distance, weight, or
size,

We love their beauty, calling each a star.

When day's decline hath sent long shadows
down,

And we are stumbling on a darkened way,
When joys, so sweet till now, assume a frown,

We grieve because our sun hath gone away.

Then shine the stars, their brightness waxing
strong,

As darkness deepens, till their tender light,
Makes us forget the road is lone and long,

Makes us in love with gentle, soothing
night.

It seems a season for the spirit's rest,

After the rushing of life's happiest hours;
It checks the current of too eager quest,
For those, who shun the thorns to seek but
flowers.

Our earth is beautiful as it reflects
The lights o'er head—the heavens' gladdest
hues,
The ocean mirrors cloudland's gay effects,
In pearly foam and strangely varied blues.
Thus with our souls. They mirror from
above;
That will prevail, which highest we en-
throne;
Our lives wear colors of the things we love,
From strains most dear will come the spirit's
tone.

Oh! there are stars below, too near to shine.
Kind, simple lives, whose glowing lamps
within
Make possible existence; like divine
Their mission is, throughout this world of
sin.
We do not always recognize their worth

Tho' oft we love them for their kindly
deeds;

They show their radiance in a later birth,
Where their new splendor both adorns and
pleads.

HOW FEW!

FULL is our world of music, beauty, love,
Earth's measured portion of glad Heaven's
completeness,

And man's experience doth most surely prove
How small the meed that cometh from above,
To mortals here, of this celestial sweetness.

The glittering iceberg, with its crystal spire,
To human eyes how few, reflects its glory;
The pulsing flames those northern skies that
fire,

The rain-bow hues, that blossom and expire,
To us, seem like some lovely, half-true story.

In tropic wastes, how many blossoms hide,
Which human sight shall not enjoy beholding,
While ice-flowers brighten lofty mountain
side,

And lilies float on many a water tide,
To few, but angel eyes, their leaves unfolding.

And oh! to think in that vast world of song,
What wondrous melodies make sweet vibrations,

And yet how few to us the strains prolong,
Of voice, bird-note, or ocean surges strong,
To cheer us with ecstatic revelations.

How many have our souls with love enshrined,
Friends, gentle, noble, worthy of our wooing,
And when our heart-strings closely were entwined,

We sudden woke, with dumb surprise to find,
Them gone, beyond the reach of our pursuing.

Ne'er shall we have, below, all things we would;

Then earth would heaven be, and we, evading,
Might grow, like men, in Paradise who stood,
Without one thought of any better good,
Or any crown of happiness unfading.

Our little lives are much too brief to clasp,
All gifts supernal in our weak embraces,
Time oft withholds the boons we daily ask;

Soon childhood's pleasures wear a sober mask,
And we grow restless in allotted places.

So few, so few, of this world's treasures rare,
Can come to us, or stay, when we possess them;
They are but types of heavenly gifts, more
 fair,
Of which our yearning hearts may win full
 share,
Without the fear of losing to distress them.

MARIE STEWART

O HEAD, twice diademed, and triple heir
To regal honors which the world denied!
O gentle soul and face so wondrous fair,
And poor cleft heart by sorrow often tried!
How sad the life that made thee, smiling, hear
The hammer's blow upon the scaffold frame;
How great the soul that never thrilled with
fear,
While England wrought her tragedy of shame.

MEMORIES

THIS place is full of memories. Every tree,
Like verdant monument, recalls some
scene,

Each trailing vine, suggestive seems to be,
Renewing ties, as doth its tendrils green.
A flower looks up like some fair childish face,
That was among the groups of long ago;
Along the paths I almost see the trace
Of tripping footsteps, going to and fro.

And in yon hall what serried ranks arise,
The girlish forms of many a passing year,
With misty, or with merry laughing eyes,
So quick to brighten, or to find a tear.
And voices that have changed, or silent grown,
Again wake mystic murmurs on the air,
They sing, they speak, they make their sor-
rows known,
Or blend in sweet harmonious hymn and
prayer.

Within those sacred walls, no artist brush
 Could paint such varied panoramic views,
As Memory's pencil, in the solemn hush
 Of gathering twilight, to my mind renews.
Before that altar young hearts often prayed,
 And older lips have spoken sacred vows,
And there hath many a quiet form been laid,
 Whose soul hath fled at summons of the
 Spouse.

Yet all is beautiful; the living days
 Are never marred by Recollection's hand;
Life brings us to the "parting of the ways,"
 But bids us not in idle weeping stand.
The tide is forward, and we, too, must press
 On to a goal, more bright than any past,
Where memory and hope combined, will bless
A day of meeting, which fore'er will last.

TO MY MOTHER

GOLDEN the bond, and close and wondrous
sweet,

That binds my heart to thine,
Apart, or near thee, years do but complete,
The ties, which both confine.
Our love, dear mother, with my life began,
But not with life, shall end;
Together, once we've crossed this earthly
span,
Eternity we'll spend.

Thy presence will felicity increase;
E'en in that perfect place,
But needed more on earth the heart-felt peace,
At sight of thy dear face.
God love thee! Thou didst kiss away the ills
Of childhood's reckless hours,
And, now, in sober years, thy image fills
A niche, 'mid memory's flowers,

Where I behold thee, sacredly enshrined,
Whether afar, or near;
Toward me ever lovingly inclined,
And always to me, dear.
Without thy love, life were a shadowed way,
And I, a child forlorn;
Thy smile hath brightened every darksome
day,
Thy hand plucked ev'ry thorn.

While deeply in my inmost soul abides
A perfect trust; no, thou
Wilt never fail me; whatsoe'er betides,
Thou'lt love me then, as now.
I love thee, Mother. Faithful to thy part,
Thou'st taught each youthful soul,
To seek sure haven in the Sacred Heart,
To find the highest goal.

GOD AND THE ANGELS KNEW

A SILVERY light in a curtained room,
Night's solemn hour, without night's
gloom;

A wasted form on the white bed laid,
Whose debt to nature seemed almost paid.
Careful watchers, with bated breath,
Prayed and wondered if this were death.
They saw no change in the pallid hue,
God held their eyes, but the angels knew.

At the twilight hour had kind friends come
To ask how it fared with the suffering one;
The gentle word and assuring smile,
Sent each to untroubled sleep awhile.
Perhaps she had prayed that it thus might be,
That her passing none on this earth should
see,

So the fever heat cooled to heavenly dew,
While only God and His angels knew.

Thus was her passing, as life had been,

Silent, and patient, and lost in Him;
A slipping away from the world's cold gaze,
Into the warmth of celestial rays.
The cross was lifted, the clouds dispersed,
As the soul alone with her God conversed,
Earth faded before the Eternal view,
While only God and His angels knew.

“PEACE, BE STILL”

SAT a fair child joyous singing,
On a daisied bank, one day,
When with martial music ringing,
Passed an army on its way,
To a field of bloody slaughter,
Where so many shall lie low,
But the farmer's little daughter
Dreameed not of impending woe.

So the child-play went on gaily,
And the child's song, clear and sweet,
Rose on morning breezes daily,
Whether victory, or defeat
Was the fate of columns serried,
She scarce noted passing by,
To be on the dark plain buried,
Or return with banners high.

Such is life—a mimic battle;
By us rushes the rude world

With incessant din and rattle
Music loud and flag unfurled;
While we may, like child, unknowing,
See the march and hear the din,
Resting on our bank, breeze blowing,
Naught to mar the peace within.

Oh! life's restless, ceaseless current,
With hoarse murmur and complain,
Swelling wide from stream to torrent
No man's power can restrain.
Oh! vast army marching ever,
To excitement's trumpet blare,
Your wild course will lead you never
To sweet peace, nor flowerland fair!

We are happy calmly sitting,
Where contentment bids us stay,
E'en while crowds, before us flitting,
Mock us for our weak delay,
We still chant our song of gladness,
On our daisied throne of peace,
Trusting childlike, free from sadness,
Till that day when strife *must* cease.

UNDER THE SHADOWS

UNDER the shadows our footsteps e'er tend,
 Whichever the pathway we tread,
Whether in passing, or just as it ends,
 Life leads to the point we all dread.
In the heyday of youth, many enter the shade,
 And many, who e hair has turned grey;
And some, with the plans for a future well
 laid,
 Grow conscious of hope's first decay.

An illness, misfortune, an accident—death,
 Is the passport we're sure to receive;
And quick to the world goes the gossiping
 breath,
 That its circles we're destined to leave.
Are we missed? Very little. For others
 advance;
 The career that has latest begun,
Finds oft in our absence a coveted chance;
 Men turn to the new-risen sun.

We have passed 'neath the shadows. The
world still turns round;

There is business, and pleasure, and mirth;
Few hearts will regret us, except those close
bound

By the links welded near the home hearth.
To pass 'neath the shadows, poor, helpless,
and ill,

By the hand of disease—in sharp pain,
To see others moving and yet to lie still,
To lose, while we know others gain,

To nature is hard. Yet these desolate hours,
Bring us nearer to what Heaven holds,
And to eyes, viewing earth with their fast
failing powers,

A rare vision of beauty unfolds.
What we lose, seems a trifle; a treasure we
win;

There is peace 'neath the shadows, sweet
peace,
And the heart thus bereft sees a future begin,
Of pure happiness never to cease.

COMPLETE

THERE is no night without its gleaming star,
No sunless day,
No restless sea, without its sandy bar,
And shallow bay.
No troubled day, without its twilight calm,
To soothe the heart,
No aching void, without some healing balm,
When woes depart.

There is no road without a welcome turn
Toward shadows cool,
Inviting onward weary feet that burn,
To limpid pool.
No gurgling spring without a singing rill,
Down rocky steep,
No valley fair without its sheltering hill,
Where violets sleep.

No mountain fastness without some poor home
For God's wild things,

Nor stately tree but lifteth leafy dome,
 To shelter wings.
No ocean vast without its pebbled beach,
 No unknown soul,
With aspirations that she may not reach,
 And find her goal.

THE MAGIC SCARF

I AM weaving a scarf of the woes of life,
Its gruesome hue relieved,
With a thread of gold, neither bought, nor
sold,
But picked from the seams of strife.

I put on my scarf in the early morn,
And wear it throughout the day,
Ignoring its hue, while the gold shines thro',
To guide to a happier way.

I take off my scarf in the tranquil gloom,
When heaven is rich with stars;
For this hour brings rest to a trustful breast,
And trials find daily tomb.

You may gather your share of the golden
threads,
If you watch for them every day,
And close your eyes to the sad surprise,
Often seen by the heart, which dreads.

Your scarf will lengthen, as you go on,
And the woof grow wondrous bright,
If a gentle tongue keeps the heart still young,
When our youthful joys are gone.

How many are wearing a scarf of woes,
Without a glint of gold,
And never dream of the rough-edged seam,
Where the shining threads repose.

TO A YOUNG GIRL

THOU must be holy. Day by day impress
This lesson deeply on thy youthful
heart;

Wait not until dark visions of distress
Shall cloud thy light and bid thy joys
depart.

Virtue alone can guide to ports of peace;
Virtue alone can teach thee to endure;
This treasure every day and hour increase;
Be virtue thine, the rest is all secure.

BESIDE THE WELL

JESUS, aweary, rests beside the well,
While toward the city His disciples go
Seeking life's sustenance. He fain would
tell

Some soul, where living waters ever flow.
One comes, a woman—outwardly most fair,
At heart, alas! all cancerous with sin,
She sees the Nazarene sit meekly there,
She feels a new emotion stir within.

Infinite tenderness is in His gaze,
The Heart's deep pity, beaming thro' His
eyes,
And she, used but to worldly wicked ways,
Returns the look with trembling, shy sur-
prise.

He asks for water—Was this Jew deceived?
And knew he not, Samaritan was she?
But His request her troubled soul relieved.
The jar she proffered almost eagerly.

“He is from God,” she mused, “What e’er
his speech,”

And when He told her of her crimes, she
cried,

“Sir, may I not the living waters reach,
And bathe my soul in the all-healing tide?”

’Twas all He wished; his Heart’s zeal brightly
burned;

Of saving waters, He would gladly give;
And when they brought Him food, ’twas
gently spurned,

’Tis not by bread alone that man must live.

IN HALLS OF SILENCE

THERE are vast Halls of Silence, where we
pace,

In close communion with our inner selves;
The world far off—soul with self, face to face,
With view of naught, save what within us
dwells.

The spirit waketh to some higher ken,
And, spreading wings, soars upward toward
the stars,
Strikes vaulted roof, falls gently back again,
Constrained by strong, unbroken mortal bars.

In those blest Halls of Silence there is peace,
For all who love an atmosphere so pure,
But hearts, where stormy passions rarely
cease,

Inhale such air, they cannot well endure.
Not long will restless souls herein delay,
Self, as a crushing weight, must bring them
low;

The vision is too clear; it wakes dismay,
With covered faces far away they go.

In those dear Halls of Silence, we may seek,
Companionship this earthly scene denies;
There to a patient One, may freely speak,
Without the noise of words, yet hear replies.
But love must make the mutual eloquence,
And form the mutual bond, with mystic art;
For love alone can give us confidence
In near approach to Christ's dear Sacred
Heart.

FLY, BIRD OF CENTURY

MIGHTY, O Bird of Century, thy flight,
Thro' realms of fancy and sciences unknown;

Aerial journeys toward the poles of night,
And landward wingings into every zone.

Emboldened by material success,
Thou hast intruded where God set His bound,

And what thou couldst not fathom, dared to guess,

And, to the world, proclaimed truth had been found.

The World, like Pilate, asks thee, "What is truth?"

Then turns away in haste, lest it should hear
Something that might disturb its peace, forsooth,

And fill its narrow soul with wholesome fear.
O Bird of Century, thy pinions wide

Have flown too low, too far from the Great
Good;

Thou hast been blinded by o'erweening pride
And in religion's place set "brotherhood."

Advancement do they term thy rapid sweep?
Still not all perfect, progress like to thine;
Men have not learned from thee, clean hearts
to keep,

Nor souls, to seek their destiny divine.
Tongues have not from their words false
venom cast;

Fly, Bird of Century, with drooping plume,
Thy place is in the dark, enshrouded past;
God's blessing will this era new relume.

“ ON SEA ”

AND this is God's wide Sea!
How glorious is its wonderful expanse
When waves dare to the heavens advance,
And shadowed waters kiss the azure sky,
On every side, that meets the wanderer's eye,
As but a tiny speck, this noble bark,
Rocks on the billows of the ocean dark,
And sore-distressed our coward hearts would
be,
Did we not rest, O God, our hopes on Thee?

This is God's stormy sea!
How terribly sublime its foamy wrath!
How mountainous appears the vessel's path.
A leaden firmament the scene obscures,
Each angry billow to destruction lures.
Fierce, roaring winds our terrors but increase,
Until the Master calmly sayeth, "Cease."
With joyful hearts and humbly bended knee,
We offer grateful prayers, O God, to Thee.

This is God's moon-lit sea!
A silver radiance on each wavelet shines,
And noiseless currents flow in burnished lines
The crest-wreaths break with opalescent
gleams,
And all is beautiful, as youth's fair dreams.
So calmly beautiful, so soothing sweet,
An hour to bring us singing, to Thy feet,
That with the midnight murmurs of the sea
We, too, may offer vocal praise to Thee.

This is God's sunny sea!
The silver of the moon-ray now doth merge,
Into the richer hues of golden surge,
In dazzling splendor dance the waves along,
Suggestive of a gaily festive throng.
Sea-gulls and swallows gradually appear,
Revealing there are verdant shores a-near,
And we rejoice, a port secure to see.
Lord, may life's voyage take us safe to Thee!

A BIRD AT SEA

THE great Atlantic tossed its feathery foam,
Miles many from the wanderer's nearest
home,

When lo! a little bird did fearless roam
The untracked realms of air.

We saw no land. Can that small eye
retain

A picture of the shore, beyond the main?
Its heart expect safe harbor to regain
Trusting its Maker's care?

The little pilgrim was in livery drest
Of ocean colors; white, like billow's crest,
With sea-grey plumage o'er its snowy vest,
Its bright eye bold and free.

Sometimes the bird our steamer deftly
passed,

Sometimes it poised and rocked upon the
blast,

Again it, resting on the highest mast,
Looked down askance to see.

Could it be any innate love of change,
Or human wish to visit climes more strange,
Had led this tiny traveler far to range,
Eager for what is new?

We guessed its home to be some island cave;
A rocky cavern, o'er dark prisoned wave,
Where flocks akin their wide-spread pinions
lave,
Yet no isle was in view.

Tho' many started, one alone could dare,
This long, wing-voyage thro' the sunny air,
Nor had its fellows tried the flight to share,
Beyond the sea-mews' call.

Eve's shadows fell; the small craft slackened
speed,
It faded, vanished, never taking heed
Of us, who wondered if an hour of need
Should yet the bird befall.

Nor do we know, if on its darkened way,
It lost its bearings toward the sheltered bay,

And met destruction ere the light of day,
 Beneath a treacherous sea.
Tho' from its throat no gladsome song we
 heard,
Its act was stronger than e'en spoken word,
A lesson sweet was taught us by that bird
 Of trust, O Lord, in Thee!

WALKS IN ROME

STRANGE and unreal the fleeting days seem,
Walking the streets of Rome;

Present and past blent, as oft in a dream,
We wander about an old home.

In all God's earth shall we nowhere else find,
Pagan and Christian art closely combined;
Arches of triumph for shedding of blood,
When Rome sent her legions o'er mountain
and flood.

Each narrow street, where a palace arose
In splendor and beauty and strength against
foes,

Can, doubtless, tales marvelous to us unfold,
Suggestive of more that shall never be told.

Childhood's best fairyland could not invent
Contrasts so strikingly bold,

Youth's wildest visions could never present
The fullness of all we behold.

Mighty indeed must that nation have grown,
Whose records remain of a world overthrown,

Yet the homes of its Cæsars have crumbled
to dust,
And swords of its heroes are eaten with rust.
But Constantine's Labarum still waves on
high,
No longer the Christian comes forth but to die;
The temples of God have false temples defied,
And the glories of Faith supplant glories of
pride.

One we have seen, on whose brow shadows
rest,
Dwelling, secluded, in Rome,
For on that brow is a thorny crown pressed;
Earth offers no other home.
Here, till the end, must he patiently wait,
Sweetly submissive to this unsought fate;
"Quo vadis, Pio?" none to him shall say,
Until he can answer, "God calls me away."
So Rome, with her beauty, her relics, her lore,
Can offer no picture that touches us more,
Than Pius the Tenth, with his mild, beaming
eyes,
From which scarce hath vanished a mourn-
ful surprise.

IN HEAVEN WE KNOW OUR OWN

WHEN we have passed from out this
shadowed gloaming,
And hear no more the Vesper bells of earth,
Shall we, with happy, kindred spirits roaming,
Rejoice together in this second birth?

When standing by that Land's unceasing river,
We note a tiny soul bark on the tide,
Can we say, looking toward the great good-
giver,
"Lo! one I loved upon the other side?"

And when the jeweled, jasper gates wide
swinging,
Will tell us that a ransomed crowd comes
home,
Can we, among the grateful voices ringing,
Be first to recognize a dear one's tone?

And looking on those heavenly lighted faces,
Can we the friends of other days descry,
Tho' now adorned with fair, transcendent
graces

To fit them for this dwelling pure and high?

Oh! what a joy, to see bright wreaths immortal
On brows our heart's love crowned in fleet-
ing time;

And with what bliss we hail the op'ning
portal

That brings a new guest to this feast divine!

And when one comes, who aught to me has
given,

The lightest care—a gentle soothing word—
I shall kneel, praying to the King of Heaven,
“A thousand blessings for their kindness,
Lord.”

There will be peace forever and forever,

When all our Father's children are at home.
No strangers there; no fear that we must
sever,

Methinks in heaven we shall know our own.

ST. STANISLAUS

ONLY a dark-eyed Polish boy,
In whose ancestral halls
The martyr's palm and warrior's plume,
Hung high on time-stained walls.
A crown elective, he might win,
His was a royal race,
But dreams of earthly honors ne'er
In his meek soul found place.

His sanctity had been foretold,
And so his mother knew
The babe she held with reverent love
Was of the "chosen few,"
Who never yield to blighting sin,
Tho' well the cross they know;
Who look upon earth's highest joys
As part of earth's false show.

The world his boyish form admired,
His mien—his glorious eyes,

But Stanislaus, ignoring praise,
Gazed only toward the skies,
And seemed to feel no azure vault,
Between his soul and God;
Seraphic love made Heaven for him
While this dark vale he trod.

To old Vienna came our youth,
To do a student's part,
There stand harsh persecution's test,
With all his saintly art.
A brother's sneer—a brother's arm
Assailed him day by day,
Until one shadowed night, alone,
The poor child fled away.

The prompt pursuit of wrathful Paul
Failed—tho' his steeds were fleet,
While blessed Canisius read the soul
Soft pleading at his feet,
And welcomed Stanislaus as one
Whom God had brought to dwell
Beneath religion's sacred roof,
In Jesuit's bare-walled cell.

Brief was his stay. A novice still
Within the house at Rome,
He lingered scarcely two brief years,
When angels called him home.
Oh! what a wondrous scene at death,
Ere youth and beauty fled,
The Queen of Heaven herself appears—
Our Stanislaus lies dead.

Only a dark-eyed Polish boy,
Yet many lands proclaim
His glories to a listening world,
His virtues—his blest name.
Wherever young and fervent souls,
His counsels keep to-day,
Around the shrine of Stanislaus,
They humbly kneel to pray.

The heroes whose great names go forth,
On fame's far-flying wings,
Receive such honors as they prized,
Such tribute as earth brings,
But only homage of true hearts
To Stanislaus is given,
By those who long to imitate,
And dwell with him in Heaven.

“TWICE AT THE HELLESPONT”

ARGUMENT:—Xerxes, king of Persia, was son of Darius and Atossa and grandson of Cambyses. His first desire after ascending the throne was to conquer Greece, but the question was long mooted among his councilors, of whom the chief were Mardonius, an experienced general, and his uncle Artobanes, a wise and peaceful-minded statesman. Their advice accorded with their respective characters. Xerxes was inclined to listen to his uncle, who objected to the war, when an apparition threatened, and terrified the king for three nights, and produced a reaction in his sentiments. Never before in the world's history had so grand an expedition been planned and carried out; a bridge of boats was built across the Hellespont, over which passed, as in review before the exultant king, the multitudes constituting his vast and motley host.

Alas, for the fallacy of human hopes! the monarch in his glory wept, thinking—“where will all these be a hundred years from now?” The expedition was soon brought to a close most disastrous for the Persians;—the Greeks were fighting on their own soil—their valor outweighed the numbers of the effeminate Asiatics. The battle of Salamis frustrated the Persian hopes, Xerxes fled almost alone, and finding his great bridge at the Hellespont shattered, was obliged to cross the strait in an open boat—what a contrast!

UPON a throne of glittering marble carved,
Proud Xerxes sat beside the Hellespont;
His bridge of boats across the waters stretched,
In readiness for Persia's countless hordes,
Those straggling thousands, now to venture
o'er:

Europe and Asia, both must be their prey.
Apparelled with magnificence, the King
His glory sought to feel, and others make
To feel it too. About the monarch stood,
A splendid retinue with dazzling arms
And ornaments. Ne'er such a scene as this
Had daybreak gilded by the Hellespont!
The wondrous roadway from Abydos lay
O'er waters dark to Sestos' massive gate.
To see the great procession slowly tread
That bridge of Persian skill, proud Xerxes
smiled,
And gloried as the master of the host.
First came the baggage trains, fine horses,
mules,
And camels bearing stores immensely great;
Drivers and keepers, too, attending them.
Next marched a troop of many nations, well

Commanded, but arranged with want of skill;
Then splended horsemen, rich caparisoned,
And myriad spearmen, weapons trailing low,
In token of submission to the King.
Banners, with strange device and talisman,
Their gaudy pennons flaunted to the breeze.
Secure, with warriors to the front and rear,
Priests carried symbols of their mystic rites.
Then poured the serried legions, rank on
rank,
With costly raiment clad, but sad at heart.
What cared they for a blood-bought conquest,
fruit
Of Persia's pride? Their weary limbs, sore
ached,
Beneath their vesture's bright and motley
hue;

They sickened at the memories of home,
Oft cursed the future and its dismal fate.
Hopeless and wretched, o'er the bridge they
marched,
While Xerxes gazed exultant on their ranks.
But see! a cloud is gathering on the brow
Beneath the diadem. What! Xerxes weeps?

"Smile not, Mardonius, at my gathering tears,
They prove no recreant heart, nor childish
fears;

Such things befit not me;
But as I gaze this gorgeous scene upon,
The thought arises, 'a hundred years to come
Where will these thousands be?'

"As surge they now across the mighty span,
As in the pageant man quick follows man,
So shall they cross life's sea;
Once o'er that gulf beyond our human ken,
On what victorious field shall they rest then,
Where will these thousands be?

"O gallant warriors! must ye pass away?
And I too with ye? Bitter be the day
That brought us such a doom!
Is all this pageant but an empty dream?
Must time's resistless hand soon shift the scene
And cloud us in the tomb?

"I'll weep no more! There's glory to be won,
Before my grand career is fairly run;
Athens must yield, or burn.

I'll suffer no strange power in this wide world,
To mock at banner Persia once unfurled;
 Bold Greece our threats did spurn.

"Dear shall her folly cost; her fault she'll rue,
For this across the strait the great bridge grew,
 For this we've risked our all.
Great Cyrus dreamed of conquering distant
 Greece,
Darius planned the war in days of peace,
 On me their mantles fall.

"Love I not well to hear the trumpet's blast?
Can I not share the soldiers' rude repast,
 And march steel-clad like them?
Thou knowest, Mardonius, how my boyish
 arm
Could quick avenge some real, or fancied harm;
 I was a man 'mong men.

"But, Artobanes, years have cooled thy blood,
Thou look'st on war, as a destructive flood,
 Good uncle, frown not now—
Back thou to Sardis: help to rule the state,
And bid my mother patiently await
 Her son with laureled brow.

"Yea, we shall come again with victor's plumes,
Leaving pale Greece in tears o'er many tombs;
 Wailing her captives led
In chains o'er desert waste; my heart is
 thrilled,
Dreaming of days, when with fond hopes
 fulfilled,
 Again this road we'll tread.

"But see! the rear guard's moving slowly on.
Bring here my chariot, we, too, must be gone.
 Good uncle, all adieu!
Tell brave Atossa when the grain is gold,
We will return for harvest as of old,
 To your good queen be true!"

The stately chariot lumbered on its way,
King Xerxes bearing to the battle-field,
And then—Thermopylæ defied the hordes.
Brave red-robed Spartans calmly dressed their
 hair
For battle, as would Persians for a feast.
Before the iron valor of the Greek,
Those numbers failed. At Salamis, was struck
The fatal blow—Xerxes, ere many days,

Despairing, crushed, stood by the Hellespont
Once more, but ah! the change! his mighty
 bridge
Was shattered—his last hope forever fled.

"Avenging gods! the great bridge torn away?
But I must cross in haste, this very day.

 Methought I heard a shout.
Quick! quick! the tide is dark—Come hither,
 slave!

Untie your boat; the rushing stream I'll brave,
 I am the king—push out.

"Was that the tramp of horse, or whistling wind?
Think'st thou my lurking foes press close
 behind?

 Let us not tarry here—
What was that sound? Come man, my hands
 are weak,
Row thou this craft—perchance some skulking
 Greek
 With dark intent steals near.

"Surely none know poor Xerxes now—Alas!
That Persia's king should come to such a pass,

Well may I o'er this weep.
How will Atossa's haughty eye grow dim,
To see a fugitive steal softly in,
When all are wrapped in sleep.

"At Hellespont again:—cursed be the hour,
I dared to tempt the sturdy Grecian power,
On its own cherished soil.
From Hades came that spectre of the night
That lured me to my doom—Ah! shameful
flight,
How shall I homeward toil?

"Is that the shore? O, Asia! spurn me not,
Home have I come, bereft—condole my lot!
Forgive thy fallen king!
Thy son extends to thee his empty hand,
Sad, sad the hour he ever left thy land,
To hear the Greek bards sing!

"Contending furies tear my inmost soul.
Roll o'er this body, dismal waters, roll!
And yet I shrink—to spurn
And fling sweet life thus hopelessly away?
Drown slave! the tide thy tongue shall stay!
To Sardis now I'll turn."

REVEREND CHARLES NERINCKX

WHEN Revolution smote the face of France
And Peace retired with sad and tear-
ful glance,

Bold Reason by the rabble was enthroned,
Religion could no more be safely owned.
God's ministers were mocked at and reviled,
Sent to the guillotine or hopelessly exiled;
Religious rites foul treason were pronounced,
God-fearing men as traitors were denounced.
Poor France! to turn from God in such an
hour,

When most she needed His protecting power!
In such times Nerinckx lived. His Flemish
home

With French restrictions, hateful had become,
And he, but late anointed, felt his heart
With zeal and indignation rent apart.
His eyes across the trackless ocean turned
To free America—for souls he yearned,

Here souls, he knew, were famishing and
sore

And he could give them bread. He sought
our shore.

What was Kentucky in that early time?
'Neath Nature's smile indeed a favored clime;
But few were here who worshipped Nature's
God,

And asked a blessing on the virgin sod.

Wide spread the oak boughs on the sloping
hill,

From springs like crystal trickled many a
rill,

Low willow branches drooped o'er glassy
streams,

And sweetest wild flowers drank the morning
beams.

Gay woodland choirs, untutored, sang God's
praise;

Forests more frequent were than fields of
maize.

These noble hills stretched upward to the
skies,

Silent and sad, tho' crowned with sunset
dyes;

For ah! beneath the chestnut's leafy shade
The Indian wigwam frequently was made,
And forth the warrior stole as evening fell,
To slay the paleface in the verdant dell.
The poisoned shaft and tomahawk were
sent

To those who sought their homes in sweet
content.

And men who looked to pass a peaceful
night,

Awoke ere morn in terror and affright.

Men, from afar, such gloomy prospects found,
They called this spot the "dark and bloody
ground."

But Nerinckx came, with prayerful love and
hope,

To cheer and bless. Scarce other tongue he
spoke

As yet, but those of Fatherland and Church.
So eager he, for straying souls to search,
He could not linger, and God blessed each
word;

Men understood, and felt their bosom stirred.
Were not sweet angel faces hovering near,
When that lone horseman slowly did appear

Weary and travel-stained? Yea, Heaven was
glad;

No longer should these hills be dark or sad.
By yon small dwelling, with a heaving breast
Badin spoke welcome to his holy guest;
And as they prayed united heart and hand
A blessing fell upon the darksome land.
Years onward sped, of unexampled toil,
Hearts harder seeming than the rocky soil,
But still this giant labored, waited, prayed,
For God he worked—he would not be dis-
mayed.

And soon the struggling pioneer looked up
and smiled

To hear sweet church bells echoing thro' the
wild.

Men's hearts were touched; remembering
home and youth,

With eager steps they thronged to hear God's
truth.

The missionary traveled far and wide,
To seek his flock by stream—on mountain
side;

Of all the good accomplished, no man knows,
His deeds were those the *angel's* record shows.

He made no laws; 'twas not for that he
came,

Nor founded cities burdened with his name;
But temples rose, while sound of hymn and
prayer

Was wafted on the misty, incensed air.
While Europe heard Napoleon's blast of war,
While Nelson laurels won at Trafalgar,
When Austerlitz made France forget her loss,
On Western hills brave Nerinckx reared the
cross.*

He worked for Heaven, so Heaven is his re-
ward,

Yet left on earth, one trophy to his Lord,
Loretto, is his monument; but see!
'Tis living—spreading like the mustard tree.
Yonder sweet blossoms nod above his breast,
Fitly upon this spot his relics rest.
Near old St. Stephen's—first Kentucky home,
Now, as Loretto, well and widely known.
Fair to his eyes—e'en eyes in Heaven that
dwell,

Must be the changing scene, as ringing bell,

* 1805

From labor to some sacred duty calls
The gentle inmates of these humble walls;
To youthful eyes doth science here unfold
Her many vistas; youthful hearts are told
The higher aims of life; taught quick to turn
From Folly's shrine, her gilded prize to spurn.
Forth to the world Loretto's daughters go
To fight, with feeble arms, the unseen foe;
And their young charges—each year swells
the throng,—

Go forth, likewise, the good work to prolong.
When ev'ning's length'ning shadows veil the
day,

And Pleasure to the world chants syren lay,
Loretto's hymn floats upward clear and sweet
From pure hearts gathered round the Saviour's
feet,

“Shield thou, from harm, O Mother bright,
Thy children shield, till dawning light.”
Nerinckx is seated now 'mid victor throngs,
Unhurt by earthly miseries and wrongs,
His apostolic heart with love still burns
For us his people e'en in bliss he yearns.
Kentucky, thou art happy to have been his
choice,

Blest wilderness, where cried the prophet's
voice,

“ Make straight his paths, be crooked ways
made plain; ”

Kentucky, cried that prophet's voice in vain ?

LORETTO

1812-1912

CENTENARY ODE

ABOVE the same arched firmament, so blue,
Two distant shores the rolling sea embraces;

The same north star, in guidance always true,
Whatever craft the watery highways traces.

A century hath spanned that billowed deep,
A century its chain of years hath lengthened,
One hundred times hath earth known bloom
and sleep,

One hundred links our claims on Heaven
have strengthened.

A heart heroic, saintly in its mold,

A stranger, in an unknown way, nought
fearing,

Sought the stray sheep of his dear Master's
fold,

In forest depth—'mid pioneer's rough clearing.
From sacred duty sworn, at home, debarred,
Constrained by laws, his priestly soul
rejected,
He left that land, whose future was ill-starred
For one, where Heaven-sent tidings were
expected.

More than one-hundred fruitful years ago,
Brave Nerinckx crossed that sea, in tearful
yearning,
Our language even yet he did not know,
But zeal impelled with its resistless burning.
Hard was his lot in missionary field,
Lonely his life of unrequited labor,
But faith assured him of a future yield,
When he, by Calvary, had won his Thabor.

Two single handed laborers soon found,
Beyond their reach this vineyard of their
choosing;
Tho' ripened harvests covered the vast ground,
Much of its rich fruit was their weakness
losing.

Oh! if the growing lambs could be prepared
For worthy life-work and eternal blessing,
If Christian teachers but their labors shared,
A hope would gleam amid this dearth distressing.

Three young hearts waited for God's holy will,
Waited and hoped and prayed, without
dejection,
They heard the spirit's voice, so small, so still,
Already virtuous, they sought perfection.
As glimmer tremulous of light afar,
Of mighty worlds may be the intimation,
So shone this hope, a small but potent star,
The harbinger of Heaven's indication.

Earth threw no glamour o'er the thorny way.
They saw but trials where their feet were
treading;
They knew death's shadow would enshroud
their day,
Before the sun's rays prosperous could be
shedding.
They were content; they sought not soft
repose,

Nor asked of God e'en purest consolation;
Theirs was the lofty aim the spirit knows,
When love aspires to total consecration.

Like Bethlehem, their home was poor and
bare,
Rough forest logs their only sheltered
dwelling.

Yet was this blest abode the house of prayer,
Its atmosphere all worldly thoughts expelling.

Their garments homespun, work of unskilled
hands,

Devoid of comfort, elegance or beauty,
Their fortunes but a stretch of untilled land,
Their recreation but hard round of duty.

But nothing daunted, these three maidens
sighed

To see their choice heroic sealed by Heaven,
And with each other charitably vied

To free their souls from earthly dross and
leaven.

And Heaven's ear bent low; light banished
gloom,

A radiance filled their inmost souls with
gladness,
Never could world its cast-off claim resume,
Never again their hearts feel hopeless sadness.

The early springtide saw three veiled heads
bow
Low 'neath religious yoke, like blossoms
tender,
June roses decked the shrine and wreathed
the brow,
When two more made a joyful heart-surrender.
Warm August sun-rays o'er the altar gleamed
When she, the sixth, in willing self-oblation
Secured the privilege of which she dreamed,
And placed her heart beyond earth's desecration.

This was Loretto's birth. No saint's first
choice,
Could poorer be; on Providence dependent,
In what God loved; they too might well rejoice

For he was poor, tho' of earth's King descendant.

Not always rapid but with steps full sure,

Loretto's march advanced toward western ocean,

God led the way, with guiding hand secure,

The Sisters followed with their lives' devotion.

The forests lessened, hardy pioneers

Blazed roads direct to settlements intended,

And as the highways grew defined and clear,

The growing Sisterhood its work extended,

And thus on mountain-side and grassy plain,

Loretto's standard was in meekness planted,

Though crude for years the soil, tho' small the gain,

One soul sufficed—'twas souls alone they wanted.

But God is faithful, and the hundred-fold

Promised to those who home and friends forsaking,

Seek heavenly treasures, neither bought nor sold,

Permits them e'en of worldly goods par-
taking
To do His work: To spread His blessed name
Where once reigned ignorance and super-
stition,
To set cold hearts with love divine aflame,
To win men's souls, while bettering their
condition.

Now lapsing years to century have grown,
Both Founder and first members calmly
resting
In Heaven, may know how well the seed was
sown,
How their successors are life's rude storm
breasting.
Though stately walls the cabin home replace,
And far and near Loretto's branches bending,
The Via Crucis oft the Sisters trace,
Still at the Cross, with Mary, each attend-
ing.

They do not ask to lead unsaintly lives,
Nor choose but flowers, while the thorns
are waiting.

Like bees, content in rude or crystal hives,
Their golden honey store no whit abating.
Apart from duties which the world may view
Their daily lives are stamped with Mary's
Dolor,

A high vocation must each soul pursue,
Religious first, then teacher, friend, consoler.

O tiny seed! O labor's fruitful years!
O chain, a century hath left unbroken!
Fulfilment of good Nerinckx' prayers and
tears,
Work blest throughout with many a heav-
enly token.

The future may be trusted, as the past.

While Providence your little bark is steering,
May power for good thro' earth's endurance
last,

And *souls*, Loretto's jewels, Heaven be
nearing!

“LEGEND OF ANTIOCH”

A Tale of the East

“LEGEND OF ANTIOCH”

A Tale of the East

I

A LEGEND now from Antioch! A tale,
So simple, for your pleasure, simply
told.

In ages past upon the sloping side
Of cedar-shadowed Lebanon, there burst
A tiny spring, from which clear, slender rills,
Like silv'ry arrows, shoot along rock walls,
And joining, then, they bound away and
spread,

As joyous waters northward gently flow,
In freedom seeking flowery, Syrian plains.
Here, finding one of Nature's loveliest
shrines,

The graceful stream curves westward toward
the sea.

In days long, long ago, they called this
stream
Orontes, and Seleucus, mighty heir

Of Alexander's sword-bought world, surveyed
This favored spot, upon the river's left,
And forthwith had foundations laid to build
A lordly city. Antioch arose,
In wealth and splendor, with a seaport town,
Distant a score of miles, Seleucia—
A Macedonian name. Aspiring Greeks
Here sought abodes, beside proud titled lords
From Rome, and Asiatics, keen in trade;
Here prospered to magnificence, until
The busy, rising capital was styled,
"Crown of the East"
Almost three hundred years
This "Crown" had bloomed. Jove had there
his Temple,
Gem-decked and golden, but the blindfold
god,
Old Plutus, was of all, the deity
They worshipped best. Rich was the eastern crown.
Outside the towered city in her prime,
By margin of the silver stream, was built

A stately dwelling, that with spacious porch
Faced eastward, and within whose walls
were found
Great pomp and luxury, displayed with care,
In full-draped tapestry and rich divan;
In carpeting, bright-hued, and softly thick,
No echo yielding to the measured tread.
Beyond, the lovely Syrian plain lay stretched,
With vine-clad Mt. Amanus to the south,
A verdant promise from its flowered base
Of generous vintage, for this year, at least.
Fruit trees, in blossom, graced the river vale,
And many a roseate vista guided straight
From wall to water, by the merchant's home.
Nature was mantled there with od'rous
bloom,
Betok'ning hopes of balmy spring-tide days.
The flowers, near by, were not in fullness yet,
But plentiful, so when the morning broke,
Or dews of evening fell, the swaying breeze,
Was redolent of sweets. Mustama old,
A merchant of Greek ancestry, and lord
Of this domain, had long resided here,
With wife and children, slaves and merchan-
dise,

Swelling his fortune at the city's mart.
His habitation, decked with liberal hand,
For princes of a royal line, was meet.
A heathen and a master stern was he.
With little care for aught beyond his trade,
But in all dealings just, as far as goes
A pagan's virtue; wondered men thereat.
His gold he highest prized—his children next,
And last came wife and slaves. Yet Lunará
With gentle dignity and grace endowed,
Commanded more respect than others won.
She knew herself to be Mustama's wife,
His children's mother,—mistress of his slaves,
A household drudge, with them, and—nothing
more.

If e'er she chafed, or grieved at this, none knew;
For trace of such emotion was not seen
Upon the calm, dark face, on which nor time,
Nor tyranny had blighted youthful charms.
Right fair she seemed to her three little ones,
Who, in simplicity, loved her full well,
And solaced much her joyless life. A girl,
Now tall and lithe, and Talmon, eldest son,
Best loved by both his parents, made complete
This household strange.

II

THE GLAD RETURN

'Twas nigh the close of day;
The arrowy rays of fading sunlight shot
Athwart a motley group, gathered beneath
This vestibule of opulence. There stood
The portly merchant, with expectant air,
And at his side, a radiant vision, one
More like an angel, than a thing of earth;
Rich flowered robes fell round her slender form,
O'er all a silken mantle, pale, sea green,
Fringed and embroidered with fine silver
thread.

Her oval eyes were brown as scented wood,
The russet glory of her hair clung close
About a peerless brow. She wore a veil,
A thing of gossamer, which hid no grace,
But beauty much enhanced. Well was she
named
Zilra the Beautiful.

The children came,
In sportive fondness grasped the father's
hand

And bade him lift them higher, thus to share
The gladsome vision with the foremost
there,

For all eyes looked one way; but not toward
The sunset glories of the western sky.

The road, southeast from Syria that came,
Was all they valued in that landscape dim;
They longed for rising dust of caravan
Along that much tracked route. A weary
year

Had passed away since first they ventured
forth,

Camels and slaves, and Arab steeds, a few,
Upon that thread-like way, with guidance
sure

Of Talmon brave, the merchant's eldest son.
To India, even, had he journeyed far,
In company with others of his craft,
Across bleak desert waste, and rugged steep,
Oft cut by fierce monsoon, or fording streams,
And braving warlike natives, shunning e'er
The pilfering Arab, dreading even more
The prowling beasts, that stole from mountain
height

At dusky eve, or worse, the hissing snake

In trackless desert sand.

Of younger years
Was Talmon than the bearded merchants
grave,

With whom he rode; yet carried he a heart
Unfearing and as true, as followed erst
Bold Alexander o'er a conquered world.

His mien was sober for his years; full proud,
His calm reserve to strangers often seemed.
Yet when he spoke, few failed to heed his
speech,

E'en in that motley band. Of them, the most
From Syria came, and so, when homeward
bound,

Our Talmon meant to follow to their marts,
Complete his purchases and cancel debts.
These Syrian merchants knew his father well.
Had traded with him, yet Mustama's son
Resembled not his sire. Talmon conversed
Of that which brought them east: more fre-
quent still,

His theme Philosophy—a favorite one,
Altho' it puzzled him; and when he found
A mind congenial to his own, he asked
With deep concern of the proud Jewish race,

Its history—Jehovah—mighty God,
Its mode of worship, in most things unlike
The varied pagan rites. An aged man,
Who bore him company along the route,
His queries gently answered, on this point,
And finding him still anxious, told, at last,
Of the Messias and his recent death.
Then as they rode the mercer kindly said,
“ At my abode thou wilt be welcome, son,”
And Talmon gladly answered, “ I will come.”

The merchants parted on the Indus banks,
Agreeing here to meet at their return;
Each man to seek his treasures went afar;
Huge bales of silk and costly dyes they heaped,
Some precious stones, with wood and spices
 rare,
Ostrich feathers, myrrh and poppy juice,
A store of seed, from these bright India lands,
Included were, with minor things, esteemed
Of value, in that rude, commercial age.
The homely caravansary first reached,
Gave shelter, till the members, lagging yet,
Should all arrive; the caravan might then
Feel strong in numbers and from danger free,

Move on securely to their distant homes.
We will thus leave them, crossing moonlit
plain,
Or faint 'neath Asiatic noontide sun;
The scorching sand, like fire beneath their
feet,
For we must now revert to Antioch.
Such expeditions were of hazard then,
Therefore had sped full many an anxious
thought—
To foreign markets all this weary year.
The father, divers fears had entertained,
Lest ill should there befall his son. The
months
Had circled round and brought the fragrant
spring.
Swift-footed couriers, to-day had come,
To say the caravan approached, and ere
The darkness fell, would be at Antioch.
Mustama's heart was moved as ne'er before,
His manly son—his merchandise, were things
He held most precious in his pagan heart.
Swart, turbaned slaves were eager watching
too.
Above them, in a rich apartment stood

A tall, dark, handsome woman, all alone,
From casement drawing back the damask
folds,

With eagerness, that she might also gaze
Where other eyes were turned. She first
espied

The trav'lers from afar, but gave no sign,
Although her bosom heaved, and all her soul
Was thrilled with gladness strong, to see that
face

So like her own. “ My son! My eldest
born! ”

She, trembling, whispered low, then moved
away,

Returned for one more glance, and lingering
mused—

“ His proud eye seems so tranquil—why, a
year

Hath much improved that which I perfect
deemed.”

Again she backward stepped, and sighing,
sought

Her tasks. Poor pagan mother! Few and
rare,

Her joys domestic! Christian matrons, you

To whom tall, bearded men do lowly bend,
With reverent hearts, thank Heaven you did
not live

Before the Boy of Nazareth obeyed—
Nor ere the Man of Galilee us gave
His Mother, in new dignity enthroned.

Now all behold the caravan. Glad shouts
Proclaim the tidings as from clouds of dust,
The moving figures, one by one, emerge.
First Talmon, riding his best Arab steed,
The well-armed slaves and laden camels next,
Together keeping till the outer wall
Is fairly reached. The youth, with kindling
cheek,

Springs lightly from his seat—the terrace
mounts.

And gains the vestibule with one quick bound.
"My father dear!" to Zilra turning then,
"Why little one, a woman thou so soon?"
And feeling childish fingers grasp his robe,
With smiles he circles, playfully, the three.
The fond old man was happy unto tears
"I'm but a common trafficker," he said,
"Yet truly, am I father to a prince,

Look at his mien—could prince's loftier be? "
The flush grew deep in Talmon's olive face,
His eyes assumed a grave, expressive look,
"My mother, where is she?" he softly asked.
Surprised, they heard, "Wouldst thou see
Lunará?

She is within the hall, where slaves prepare
To welcome thee." "I will go seek her
there."

Departed he, while wondering they gazed,
Thinking this haughty youth was greatly
changed.

Soon to his camels did the merchant turn,
Still muttering: "Whence comes this rever-
ence

For woman?" but the precious cargo drove
Such meditation from his busy mind.

The girl stood, toying with large, fleckless
pearls,

Her brother's gift; the children's noisy glee
Showed plainly that he had not slighted them.
Within the banquet hall, the docile slaves
Their mistress' bidding promptly sought to do,
But hushed their clamor, as each ready ear

Heard the young master's tread. He quickly
passed

Among their prostrate numbers, scattering
coins,

And when the trembling mother's stately
form

Inclined as well, his strong arms held her fast.

His lips pressed lovingly her lowered brow,

As ne'er before since childhood's sunny day.

"Sweet Mother! far away 'twas meet thy
boy

Should go, if but thy priceless worth to learn."

Was it a dream? And what its import
strange?

'Twas Talmon's voice, and Talmon's piercing
eye,

No heartless trick, or subterfuge in him,

For he was noble, even when most proud.

"My Mother, 'tis for thee this soft, rich robe

Of Tyrian dye. Wear it, for me to-night

And thou shalt sit beside me at the board."

Her eyes looked troubled, "But thy sire?"
she said.

"Refuse me aught to-day? This shall be
first

Of my requests.” And she was at the feast,
Attired according to his wish; her cheeks
Aglow with new-found happiness and hope.
Mustama wondered that his wife could look
So like a queen. A hearty feast it was!
Ne’er had a blither been within those walls.
Some tie their hearts had never felt before,
This night drew them together. Viands rare,
And amber-colored wines remained untouched.
All fed on Talmon’s words. The minstrel
 strains,
They quickly hushed to catch his lightest
 tone,
So long unheard. With grave voice he re-
 hearsed
Of knowledge, stores, brought like those
 hoarded wares
From o’er the plain: How people clad them-
 selves
In strange, bright vestures, while some Tar-
 tar clans,
Roamed with their herds, and wore their
 hairy coats.
He pictured well sweet nature’s wondrous
 charms,

Near old Euphrates, with its storied name,
And Tigris, running always swift and clear,
The streams that bounded Eden when the
world

Was new. The weird, wild charms of Lotus
Land

His topic then, fit type of pleasure's realm,
Where men forget all else, and fruitless dream,
Of what is not. The matchless Cashmere
vale,

He likened to a gem, high set amid
The loftiest mountain-peaks our earth can
boast,

From whose snow-crowning issues Indus'
stream,

And sacred Ganges. Manners and pursuits,
Religion, languages, he mentioned too.

They lingered, still, entranced to hear his
voice—

It earnest grew, almost pathetic seemed,
As with rare eloquence, Jerusalem,
Symbolical and grand, he next described,
Fair Antioch's white rival in the South.

Too soon such blithe hours vanish. Mid-
night came,

And smiling guests departed one by one.
Mustama, proud and happy led his son
To speak of topics that he relished best,
Confiding to his ear his lofty hopes.
The young man sighed; yet all things promised
well.

All this was long ago, when kindred ties
But lightly bound. How is it now? Hath
time
Brought better things to each domestic hearth?
Ah! who can say each home abides in peace?

Two slaves with torches their young master
led
To his rich couch, and bowing low salaam
Solicit further orders. “ Every light
Extinguish, and then quickly to your rest.”
Amazed at gentleness so rare, the slaves
Quick, noiseless step to silver lamps, where
burn
Fresh perfumed oils, and with a breath soon
leave
The scene all darkness.

III

A CHANGE

Talmon casts aside
His gorgeous mantle, and in tunic white
Now stands alone, where his dark mother stood
At sunset, waiting for his glad return.
He parts the drapery and o'er him flows
The radiant whiteness of the full-orbed moon
Swift sailing thro' thin ether blue. But look!
He kneels—he prays—toward Jerusalem
Outstretching arms as Daniel did of old.
A pagan youth in lowly attitude!
Such humble supplication could not be
To senseless idols offered. Hear his prayer!—
“ My Lord and Saviour Crucified! This hour
Is fraught with peril. I thy succor crave;
Foul prisons, keen-edged swords—I dread
 them not,
But tremble I, at lurking dangers hid
Amid the blandishments of home. O Lord,
How can my shoulders bear the heavy cross,
In secret and alone? Now darkness falls,
Where light has been. My soul is troubled
 sore,

It shrinks and sickened grows at very sight
Of future woes, for which I deemed myself
Well fortified. Have cleansing waters flowed
In vain? O Christ! My Lord! an hour
once was,

When Thou wast overwhelmed, and struggling, prayed
Because of human weakness. Doubting self,
Therefore, courageous shall I grow again,
My trust, firm placed in thee. Send help,
My Lord! ”

Prolonged and earnest was the brave youth's
prayer,
From which he rose much strengthened and
refreshed.

His weary eyes in tranquil slumber closed,
While peace came, angel-like, into that house.

Serene the morning after this calm night!
Mustama, rising early, sought his son,
His partner now!—in haste did both proceed
To Antioch—soon reached the grand Bazaar,
Where lay the secret of the merchant's wealth.
The busy tide of traffic onward rolled,
With animation new. Domestic cares

Engrossed poor Lunara; e'en Zilra strove
To turn the spindle, but the listless mind
Forgot to guide the hand; she dreamed away
Of bright hued fabrics and rare Eastern gems.
Thro' court and garden sported tiny maids,
Eunice and Loia, tossing some quaint toy,
With clamor answering the noisy shouts
Of little Placidus. The mother smiled,
Which seeing, Zilra wondered and rejoiced,
Believing, she knew not why, that happier days
Had dawned upon their clouded home at last.
All longed for twilight, when Mustama prompt,
Would come with Talmon from the busy mart,
Although the heart of Lunar  oft feared
The loss of her new dignity at home.
But she was safe. It gratified her lord
To do what Talmon wished, and when men
scoffed

Or, mocking, turned their raillery on him
For honoring a woman, simply said,
“Peace, peace, my friends; 'tis thus the
Romans do;
We're C sar's subjects now.”

Months glided by.
Men saw a change in Talmon, nothing wrong,

Still 'twas a change—he lacked his wonted
zeal,

In seeking pleasure, and attended not
The service of the gods; his life, besides,
Was blameless, and him many fathers praised
Unto their sons, and bade them copy him.
Oft Zilra watched him, when alone he paced
The olive grove, communing with his thoughts.
Once, fawn-like glided she across the court
His mantle gaily caught, at which he smiled
And placed, caressingly, a gentle hand
Upon her head. Encouraged thus the girl
Made free to question. “ Ah! a secret hast
thou,

Thy sister can not share? Now, prove thy
love

And tell me of what merchant's daughter
fair,

Thou comest here to dream? ” “ Captive my
heart

Indeed, but to no bright-eyed Syrian maid.
My secret, dear one, sometime thou shalt
hear.

Thy own heart freely show; now what of
that? ”

"Seest thou yon pigeon cleaving the thin
air?

So is my heart as free." She flushed and
laughed;

Her fingers nestled in his clasping hand,
His eyes bent fondly on that peerless face;
A fair, frail thing she seemed to breast the
storms

Of pagan life. In anxious love he spoke;—

"Thy heart, dear child, still free? 'Tis
well, 'tis well,

Thou art too young; thy future trust to
me."

"Yea, what know I, beyond this garden
wall?"

She chatted heedlessly, pleased at this theme,
Till on his placid countenance appeared
A shade, by her frivolity evoked.

She faltered, but he did not chide, or sneer,
For reading in the clear, uplifted eyes

A proof of her unblemished innocence,

He longed to win this yet scarce-tarnished
soul

First conquest unto Christ. She little knew,
Still less cared she, for aspirations high:

Complacently she worshipped her fair self,
Unmindful of the gods.

Thou must still pray;
This soil, good Talmon, is not yet prepared;
For Christian virtues true, can flourish not,
With vanity, deep-rooted, side by side.
Some scenes sink deep in memory and live
To meet a sequel at some future day;
Such was this scene beneath the olive tree.

Mustama, too, began to notice soon
The frequent, deep abstraction of his son;
At his indifference, was much surprised,
When e'en the noblest sought his company;
Aloof he kept himself from festive scenes;
Nor, since that journey, had his foot once
crossed

The ornate threshold of the golden fane.
He, at the counter, calculated well,
And thriving was the trade, since Talmon's
hand

At helm had been. In every thoughtful word,
In every action, blended was respect
With deference true, which both ennobled
him

Who proffered, and him likewise, who received.
Men greatly praised the youth; like music
sweet

Were these laudations to the father's ear.
But Talmon heeded not their honeyed speech,
Now those, who thus approved him, little
dreamed

Of painful fasts and weary vigils long,
When thro' night's solitary hours of rest
That stalwart form, in pleading, prostrate
lay,

Asking for strength and light to walk secure
Along a slippery way; repeating oft,
“ Beloved at home, much praised abroad, I
tread

The brink of some dark, yawning precipice.
Thou wert reviled and persecuted here,
For safety, should I not resemble Thee? ”

Then followed many a petition strong,
For clouded souls of all he cherished best,
Craving some sign the truth when to reveal
In full, to those whom his example meek
Was gently leading to the light divine.

“ Would that I had a thousand lives to give,
In anguish dire would I them gladly yield

To win one priceless soul for Paradise.
If thou dost love me, Lord, let me not close
Mine eyes in death, till suffering sharp and
 keen
Hath purged my heart of sin and earthly
 dross!
Thine own Apostles hasten to our gates,
Commissioned to proclaim the holy word."

Twice had the changing seasons rolled around
Presenting nature's panoramic plan
To bless the nations, still our neophyte
Breathed o'er the self-same prayer and strug-
 gled hard
'Gainst foes invisible. But one resource
Had he—to watch and pray. The spirit's
 life
Requires, e'en yet, a close, unceasing war;
But now the Christian's arms are multiplied;
The sculptured church and gem-decked shrine
 are ours,
And countless tapers tell earth's mercy seat,
While softly chiming bells fling sweetest
 sounds
To Christian ears, a welcome, blessed call

Unto a hallowed place, where constant dwell
A royal court, unseen—God's courtiers
With blessings laden from the inmost Heaven.
The ceremonial grand and oh! the chant
Uplift the soul to nobler, holier thoughts,
Or sweet, hushed silence breathes of Heav'n
itself.

Here seven sacramental streams flow on,
Refreshing needy souls; pure, living streams
Are they from the high fountain head of
grace.

Here Calvary is carved, there Tabor's light
Is painted. Printer's art hath safe embalmed
The sacred Gospels and much Christian lore.
All this and more, needing no human speech;
Canst thou conceive what daily life would be,
With all these swept away? Talmon had
none.

IV

NIGHT UPON THE RIVER

'Twas spring again, and floral offerings
Bedecked most heathen shrines; libations
streamed
On smoking altars, heaped for sacrifice.

Mustama, like the rest, invoked his gods
And bade our Talmon to the Temple take
His victims for the vernal holocaust.
Feigning excuse, the youth turned quick
 away,
With plans of absence for the coming days.
Now preparations at the Palace hall,
Gave token of a great festivity.
Antioch's noblest only could attend,
All, who by birth or franchise, claimed to be
Free, Roman citizens. Mustama's wealth
Was his nobility, and his fair child
A gem, so brilliant, that her greeting came
From every side. Thus bidden to the feast,
This time the father scowled and muttered low,
Because a prince's hospitality
The son refused. His anger to appease,
Young Talmon led his mother to the barge,
Beside the river bank. "Together, now,"
Said he, "we seek the city's northern gate."
At this the merchant smoothed his low'ring
 brow,
And little ones, no longer fearing him,
With shouts and joyous laughter, sought his
 side.

He even smiled, when from her litter stepped
His lovely Zilra, clad in azure robes.

The polished mirror had reflected long
Her perfect form, adjusting carefully
A mantle, fringed with pearls; large flashing
gems

Adorned her girdle, not less beautiful
Than those above her brow. Her sandals
e'en

Were crusted from the mine. Well was she
named

“ Zilra the Beautiful.”

Princely the barge;
Old Egypt's queen such splendor might have
owned.

From thick, silk awnings hang small tinkling
bells,

Sweet chiming with the splash of oar-cleft
waves.

Not all unroyal seems the group within.

Flow on, flow on, Orontes! That frail bark
Now struggles 'gainst thy current; ah! how
soon

Those lightsome hearts must battle with a
stream

More rude and swift than thine! Pale sorrow's tide

Runs dark and very deep. Forebodings sad,

As yet cloud not their sweet domestic joy;
Life, stretched before them, seems but like
that wave,

With lambent, silver moon-rays burnished
bright.

Upon this picture, angels, cast your eyes;
Must shadows fall on happiness so pure?
But lo! the keel grates harshly on the sand,
The gate is reached, and many lights stream
forth

From open casements in high palace walls.
A surging crowd bears towards the portico,
Where our sweet Zilra, happy, and so fair,
Hurries from view of anxious eyes away,
And in the gazing multitude is lost.
The merchant's daughter at the feast was
queen,

In guileless beauty, and untutored grace,
Within those stately walls, where ages gone,
The mould'ring Seleucidæ proudly passed
In pageantry and mirth. So quickly Time

Doth shift the scene.

Long, long remembered each
That strangely tranquil night upon the stream.
The lightened craft is swiftly homeward
bound:

As children's drowsy eyelids droop and close,
Beside his mother Talmon seats himself
To face his revelation. "From this night,
Between us, no more secrets. I, thee wrong,
Withholding mine. I am a Christian now."

"Ah! what is that?" the woman faltered
low,

Will it destroy our peace? Quick, say, my
boy."

"Thy tears unnerve me, mother, come, be
brave.

Our sovereign Lord is called the 'Prince of
Peace.'

Thou'rt Hebrew born and must have heard
in youth

Of an expected Saviour, by the Jews

Messias called." "I have some memory

Of such a thing, but what is that to thee?

Talmon, beware! Thy father—" "Tell him
not,

At least, not yet; for to thine ear alone,
I would the secret first impart."

She watched

The rapt expression of that noble face
With wondering awe, as from his fervid lips
The story came; for him, indeed, the rose
In desert bloomed. Amid the ruddy piles
Of shifting sand, the aged merchant spoke
Of Christ to him, and when the great white
walls

Of David's city sheltered these strange friends,
From Apostolic lips instruction came.
Rich, fruitful soil then found the heav'nly
seed

In Talmon's upright heart; and, in due time,
He bent his once proud head and meekly
craved

The sacred and regenerating stream.
Like one released from bonds, the neophyte
Trod with new joy his native vale—redeemed.
Naught could disturb his soul's serenity,
Save some solicitude for those he loved;
But this pang, too, hope soothed, yet it is
hard

To check the longings of a zealous soul.

To-night his patience failed him; silence grew
Impossible, and thus he eager poured,
Into his mother's ear, the full account
Of that long journey, and its sacred close.
Swift the hours sped for mother and for son;
And seeking rest, they sleeplessly recalled
The burning words that recently had waked
Emotions, so conflicting, in each heart.
At palace, too, the hours had flying feet,
Where Zilra danced, with childlike happiness,
And gloried in the homage of the throng.
The clanging instruments betoken now
That soon that hollow mirth will all be o'er;
Step lightly, lightly Zilra! smile again
On that admiring crowd; turn brightest eyes
For one more artless, beaming glance—their
last.

Thy father beckons, and thou must away;
So, high above, another Father calls—
Sweet maiden! wilt thou hearken to this
voice?

V

CLOUDS, SILVER LINED

Why do the maiden's footsteps linger slow?
Why is her song unheard? She rarely speaks—
Hath that bewildering night of pleasures new
Sickened the giddy brain? “ Weary she is,”
Thought Lunará: still Zilra languished on.

“ What ails thee, child? ” the anxious mother
asks—

“ Her head is dazed—so very weak her limbs,”
The girl replies, for nothing more she knows.
Another day, and childishly weighs now
Upon the mother's shoulder that young head.
Fever, not health, has flushed those burning
cheeks;

Ill omened is the brightness of those eyes.

“ Haste, Cusack, hither send! ” pleads Lunará;

“ Well-skilled is he in medicines and herbs.”

Came Cusack with the twilight; leopard-like

His tread; with cunning eye he noted well

The pillared halls and tapestried salons

His mental calculations making well,

As to the profit of the case in hand,

For he was covetous of all this wealth,

And hated him who called the house his own.
"Fever, saidst thou? Ah! 'tis a tedious
thing.

By great excitement wakened? Much the
worse.

These herbs, well steeped and given cool each
hour,

Will soothe apace, and keenest pain allay.

The patient, where? "

Can this sweet Zilra be?

The merry dancer at the princely feast,

The gem of Antioch, called frequently

The daughter of the gods? All powerless

Youth, health and beauty, when disease at-
tacks.

Pain racks her limbs as 'twould a beggar's
form;

The purple and fine linen of her couch

Bring no relief. Bresca, a faithful slave,

Vies with the mother in her efforts vain

To ease the blue-veined temples, throbbing
high.

Cusack reflects—declares the pulse too quick,

The blood too highly heated; 'twill take
time

To check this fever; try the herbs at once.
Turns suddenly the girl and wildly flings
Her clustering locks, with fingers pressing
tight

'Neath shapely ears—the man's eyes watch-
ing close.

He started, muttered some vague, hurried
words

And vanished, as if something frightened him.
What had he seen? Why did he thus depart?
The mother looked at what struck Cusack's
eyes,

Some small, dark circles, with red, angry verge
Upon the maiden's neck! What can they
mean?

A dreadful fear shook that poor woman's
frame.

With stern control she pressed back scalding
tears,

To Bresca saying, "Let us steep the herbs."

Over the splendid city, shadows fell,
Dark, lowering shadows, black with night and
storm,
Torches oft gleamed and flickered in the street,

Great windows were ablaze with rich goods
hung,

But purchasers, unmindful, hurried by.

Within the portal of his grand bazaar,

Mustama sauntered, musing tranquilly,

When, like a serpent's hiss, he heard the words,

“ Proud man, the *leprosy* is in thy house.”

Near him stood Cusack with a fiendish smile.

“ Ha! fool, beware,” Mustama cried, “ Weigh
well

Thy words. Beware!” — “ Until to-morrow eve

I will thee spare; straight send the girl away,

Or of this I must information give.”

He vanished, leaving a sharp adder's tooth

Deep in the father's heart. A woful thing,

To have an enemy! Cusack had borne

A grudge against Mustama years before.

The clouded evening into stormy night

Was deepening fast, as old Mustama hied

Towards his home. No word, no sign be-
trayed

His purpose, 'till at Zilra's door he spoke

In harshest tones; “ Quick, quick, girl, get
thee hence,

Thou art accursed! Pollute not this abode

With thy foul presence more.”—“ But, Father dear—”

“ Call me not so. Rise, slave, and take her hence.”

Thus spoke the pagan Greek and they obeyed.

A moment more and through the spacious hall
Did Lunar^á glide eagerly, in love
Bearing a vase of sweet spiced beverage
To slake her darling's thirst, when hark! a
shriek,

Wild, long and piercing, strikes upon her ear.
She sees a fluttering garment in the storm,
And as the portals close, there sounds a crash,
As, like an angry lioness, she springs
To check the bolt. A stronger hand is there.
“ Monster,” she cries, “ what hath thy mad-
ness done? ”

“ Back, woman; know thy place,” came in
fierce tones,

And she, remembering her slavish days,
Fled, tottering to her babes. Passive she lay
Unconscious by the sleeping innocents,
Until the steady patter of the rain
Broke on her ear and soothed to fitful sleep.

She dreamed the truth, and woke to realize
The anguish of her dream. Disturbed—
amazed—

She tried to cheat herself with hopeful search,
Some dreadful nightmare this must surely
be!

A lurid flash revealed an empty couch.

"Gone, gone, poor wounded dove! Zilra, my
child!

My Beautiful! Where art thou gone, alone?
And in this storm! Ah! With thee let me
go!"

She tore her hair, and, wailing, cursed her
fate,

Blaming and hating in her agony.

It was a bitter ordeal, for a soul,

Still thoughtless of its origin divine.

Felt Lunar  her need and calmer, moaned

"Oh! would that I knew more of Talmon's
God!"

There must be supplication in the tears,
That anxious misery will sometimes wring
From every mother's heart. Thus Jesus casts
A tender eye upon maternal grief,
Remembering how often Mary wept.

VI

OLD MEMORIES

When we are wretched and alone, it seems
Some instinct carries to the past our thoughts:
Old joys reveal themselves, with double
 charms,

Dulling the keenness of our present woe.
Our sad souls solace find in what *has* been.
Thus doth old age, in musings, walk again
The flowery paths of youth; hearts, long
 bereft,

In memory, taste domestic bliss once more;
So, on this night, to Lunará's sad mind,
Arose the picture of that Persian home
Where passed her sunless youth; she plainly
 saw

Her Jewish mother's handsome face, o'ercast,
Just as she saw it, at their parting hour.
This mother, too, was from her race estranged,
Because in wedlock with a pagan bound.
Sadoc, her father, she had longer known,
Although she loved him less; much treatment
 ill

Had been her childhood's portion at his hand,

After the Jewish wife was cast away.
 The memory of Lunará was clear;
 With calmness wonderful she all reviewed—
 The lofty fanes, and sacrificial mounts,
 Whereon the superstitious people prayed.
 The daily customs of that barbarous land,
 She scanned and conned, as reading from a
 book,

The printed history of her native clime.
 A harrowing memory now racked her brain—
 'Twas of a day when slaves, in terror, cried,
 “Master, the Jewess hath the leprosy.”
 And then she saw her mother driven forth,
 As her dear child had been. Why was *she*
 spared—

Spared for this double curse? She could not
 rest.

“Twice seven suns since Talmon started
 South,

And he has not returned. If *he* were here—
 Yet who would dare to face Mustama's rage?
 Still things go well, when Talmon is at home.”
 She wandered listlessly the chambers through.
 “Talmon has come at last! His step, I hear.”
 And with light tread she ventured to his door.

"Welcome, as ne'er before, my son! Hast
heard—"

Her lips grew mute—for in the gloom slow
walked

Mustama, her dread lord, who, turning short,
Revealed a face, pale with remorse and shame.
Both hearts were full; all speech seemed
mockery;

His hand outstretched, but not to deal a blow;
He drew the woman toward that casement
wide,

Where she had watched—where Talmon often
prayed,

And in dumb agony both looked abroad.

All there was darkened by the unspent storm;
A strange misgiving tortured both their hearts;
Both thought of Talmon—for his presence
yearned,

And wondered how he Zilra's curse would
view—

"After the storm, we will expect our son."

Mustama's heart was sore, and tender grew
Toward the sad, wailing mother at his side,
For she was innocent; but well he knew
That he had cast away his child to die.

'Twas thus the law ordained, harsh, pagan
law!

But did the rule demand such brutal haste?

No Talmon yet. The wife with anguish
thought

Of this new grief, and dreaded its result:

Seeing her lord in such a gentle mood,

She said, "I brought this blight into thy
house;

Drive me forth too, to perish with my child,

Whom Heaven through me hath cursed."

"Nay, leave me not.

But tell me why thou callest this curse thine
own?"

"My mother was of Jewish origin,

But, by her people, scorned and cast aside,

For marrying young Sadoc, Persian born.

If her first years were bright, soon shadows
came,

For she was not alone in Sadoc's heart;

A younger Persian bride usurped her place.

Faintly I keep in memory how we dwelt

In that strange household, though not of its
band;

Still with each other we were well content,

Till once my mother tossed with fever high
And came the startling scream, ‘ ’Tis leprosy! ’
’Twas even so. They tore me from her arms
And never since that sad hour have we met.
A saddened child, they placed me ’mong the
 slaves,
In my own father’s house. With them I
 toiled,
Submissive, silent, mindful of my birth,
And for my chance of freedom waiting long.
Fared Sadoc well; men from a distance came,
Who trafficked with him, broke bread at his
 board,
And quaffed full crystal cups of his good
 wines:
Then near his right hand, I, a server, stood ”
“ ’Twas there I saw thee first,” Mustama said.
“ None so expert as I to meet their wants,
The master’s eldest daughter, yet the slave.
One summer eve, it chanced thou wert his
 guest,
And when I poured for thee the sparkling
 wine,
I caught the words, ‘ Are Persian slaves like
 this? ’ ”

"Yea—I recall thy proud defiant speech,
'No slave am I, but daughter to this man.'
Sadoc did not deny, but offered me
This Hebrew girl to swell my merchandise.
This was not to my liking, but thine eyes
Were raised to mine with mute, imploring
glance,

And so I thought, at least, to make thee free,
I'd claim thee as my bride. On my return,
I found indeed, that I was suited well."

"From Persia to my mother's native land,
Thou broughtest me. Strange destiny was
mine,

To come unto thy house as slave and bride,
To be the mother of thy children five,
And now, alas! to bring this fatal blight."

Together yet they stood, as man and wife
On equal footing, sharing mutual grief.
She sudden raised her tear-dimmed eyes aloft.
The storm was o'er, the clouds fast scattering,
And thro' a rift sailed forth the great, white
moon

Enthroned on fleecy waves. Her glory full
Tinged with mild radiance the lonely room.

“Is it a sign of hope? but oh! what hope
Remains for us?” Dragged heavily the hours,
As those bereft ones lingered on the spot
To them so sacred now for Talmon’s sake.
With crimson tips the distant hills grew
bright
As early song birds told of waking day;
So many days, like this, the saddest, broke,
But Talmon came no more.

And where was he?
With no companion but old Bresca's son,
The youth was gaily homeward hurrying
Upon that fatal eve; but, by the storm
O'ertaken, refuge he resolved to seek
Within the city at the grand bazaar.
His father might be there, and, later on,
In company they homeward could return.
The bridge was reached, tho' barely visible,
And Talmon marked the contrast; he had
gazed
From those stone arches on the festive
scene,
Scarcely a fortnight since. He hears a sound.
Orontes, who thy tide, cloud-darkened, cleaves?
A piteous moan falls weak upon his ear—

That voice! His blood seems curdling in his
veins,

" What, Zilra? " questions he in husky tones,

" What woman is abroad on such a night? "

" Welcome, good master," weary Bresca cries.

" Pray hither bring thy torch." The red
light's flare

Shows Talmon, lying all in tears and pain,

His blossom sweet, so torn and sadly crushed.

What ill betides? The girl uplifts her eyes

In pleading agony. " Wilt thou, too, flee? "

" No, not from thee, but tell me what this
means? "

'Tis quickly told. Pale, stunned—but daunt-
less yet,

The brother stands in fervent prayer absorbed.

A moment, and he gives a clear command,

Which they in haste obey, and all move on.

Think what he will, the dreadful fact remains,

Zilra a leper is—outlawed—accurst.

Their common sire—his sternness Talmon
knows—

Hath driven her from the paternal roof.

That banished she shall be, the law ordains,

From human habitation far, to wait,

In solitude for death, the sole release.
Now contact with a leper breeds the curse.
A lowly Christian Talmon had become,
He knew his Master, lepers never scorned,
Nor scorn would he; his Master was his guide.
He had his dreams, as all men have in youth,
But his were great, unselfish and so brave;
He planned a future, with much work for God,
Planting at home the tiny mustard seed,
Hoping to rest beneath its goodly boughs,
Some day, with all his dear ones Christians
too.

By this, fame, wealth and honor, nothing
seemed,
These possibly might come, and, wisely used,
Promote the cause to which he pledged his
life.

Must all his noble dreams now disappear?
This lofty fabric, must his hand destroy?
God, God alone, can strength and counsel
give;

And from his soul arises a strong prayer:
He wins grace for heroic sacrifice.

“ Farewell; forever, earthly hopes, farewell!
With Zilra, in the desert, I’ll abide.”

VII

PRAYERS ANSWERED

Thus Talmon came not, tho' they waited long.
Clear, summer morning lighted up the hills,
And perfumed eve bedewed with glittering
drops

The growth luxuriant within the court,
Where flowers bloomed, uncared for and unsought.

Poor parents! for full many a dreary year
Their light was out—their lives a hopeless
blank;

The mother's heart pined for the jest and
song;

No dancing step brought Zilra to her side—
Where was she now? secure from harm, or
dead?

Would any shield the leper, drenched and poor?
The absence of her son, tho' dear he was,
Gave hope that he was seeking, or had found
His sister. And what then? She was not
sure.

Suspense like this is dreadful weight to bear
And plays sad havoc with our daily peace.

The proud Mustama, too, was almost crushed;
Ne'er had he counted on this second loss;
His life became a heavy, worthless load;
His harsh act followed him like phantom
dread,

And after many saddened weeks passed by,
When many moons waxed full and paled from
sight,

He realized his double wrong and loss.
Men told him Talmon came to Antioch,
On such a day, and that was all they knew.
Nowhere was Bresca, nor her husband found,
And Hudiken, their loyal son, now free,
Took oath he had not seen them since that
night.

At last men ceased to wonder and to talk.
Some pitied the Greek family, but thought
'Twas right a leper should go forth to die.
Yet none could say why Talmon had re-
nounced

His lordly heritage and happy home.
Like some forgotten legend these events
Lay in men's minds, fast fading and obscure.
The merchant never spoke his children's
names,

Except to her, whose aching heart still
mourned.

Months grew to years, and years coursed
slowly by.

But mighty is the healing power of time,
And gracious is the power of children's love;
Three younger ones remained to fill the
void,

Giving fair promise as they upward grew:

One, Loia, like her mother, stately, tall,
And Eunice, in whom Zilra smiled again.

A stripling, Placidus, now active grown,
Resembled Talmon in his early days.

Forever anxious was the doting love,
With which the stricken parents guarded these,
Their living treasures. What was merchan-
dise

To flesh and blood, and young devoted hearts?

Sad memories grew fainter, year by year,
Yet faded not, because suspense fed hope.

Ne'er came a single clue of life or death,
And so these dull, blank lives crept on apace.
A glorious day now dawned for Antioch.

Ne'er marched bold conquerors to her gates
before

In guise so humble. Spent were they and
worn,

With neither scrip nor staff, tho' heralds high
Of Heaven's Lord and King; they meekly
come

To crave admittance at the city gates.
Swing gladly wide, ye portals, wider yet,
Receive the Word they bring; thy title earn,
O shining Eastern Crown! Blest Antioch!
Thou didst't throw off thy shackles readily;
A Christian first was given that sweet name
Within thy walls; there thousands flocked
beneath

The sacred, blood-stained banner of the Cross:
Though some were left to scoff and persecute,
They could not dim the glory of thy faith.
Great temples were deserted, idols fell,
The senseless rite and cruel sacrifice
Gave place to Christian worship undefiled;
Then Peter's See was fixed at Antioch.
Forgetfully Mustama lingered once,
While an Apostle, filled with burning zeal,
Poured forth the teachings of his Risen Lord:
Blessed are they that mourn! And wherefore
blest?

'Tis doctrine truly strange! And yet the
words

Rang with sweet changes in Mustama's ear,
When he had reached his desolated house.

"Knowest thou wherefore mourners are called
blest?"

His wife amazed, asked "Whence this senti-
ment?"

I've heard the same before." "Thou? when
and where?"

Our citizens are thronging fast to hear
New doctrines, preached by Galilean men,
Once fishermen, I'm told." "Gently speak
they?"

And lead they holy lives? And promise all
Eternal life and peace beyond the grave?"

"They do. Enchanted likewise thou hast
heard"—

"Nay, lord;"—her lips paled—"only it was
thus

Our Talmon spoke." "What! he a Christian
too?"

"To me, himself the secret did impart,
That night upon the river long ago."

A silence fell. At last the man exclaimed,

“ Woman, our lives are passing fast away,
And long hath Sorrow marked us for her own;
If there be aught of comfort we can find
In Christ’s religion—if *he* deemed it good,
Let us, too, share the faith which Talmon
prized.”

“ This was his daily prayer,” she cried, “ come,
come,
We and our children, all, will seek to-day,
The Messenger of Christ.”

Within a grove,

Of laurels, sacred to Adonis fair,
A grave man sat, some parchment reading
low;
His bearded mouth seemed formed for gra-
cious speech,
And dignity his every movement stamped.
A younger man, tall, swarthy and well knit,
Now cautiously approached; with reverence
bowed,

“ Good sir, a freedman, Hudiken, am I,
By promise and for duty’s sake I come.
Leagues hence, an oasis, neglected lies,
Poor lepers, stricken waifs, do there abide,
Accurst by men, and banished to the waste.

Three went unscathed, but years have doubt-
less brought

The curse to them as well. My parents these,
And one, a noble youth, left in full health,
To cherish his young sister until death.

He is a Christian, so he did not shrink."

"God's charity moved them to such a deed.

His love will not forget their needs; what
more? "

All Zilra's history Hudiken rehearsed,
Adding that he had given solemn word
To dwell near Antioch, and patient wait
Till men arrived, empowered to preach the
Word.

To desert even, they, perhaps, would send
Some drops, at least, of Heaven's refreshing
dew.

"Good sir, for saving waters, three yet pine,
For them this boon I crave." "'Tis granted
thee.

To-morrow, meet me at the northern gate."

The first, shy song birds saw the trav'lers start,
And ere the break of day they trod the sand.
'Twas like the Master's parable in fact,

This leaving safe the ninety-nine to seek
The straying few. O minister of God!
What powers, strong and marvelous, are
thine!

How far above the earth and worldly cares
Should all thy thoughts and feelings high
ascend!

The silent Julius burns with eager zeal,
Tho' all the sacerdotal functions yet,
Belong not to his fast advancing years.
His steps are hurried, when in distance gleams
The tiny circlet rare of emerald hue:
Talmon had marked this spot while journey-
ing,

Tho' not then dreaming it would be his
home.

By contrast greater was its loveliness;
Two lofty palm trees, shaded from the sun,
Between a glassy brook reflected clear,
Soft, mossy banks where nodding flowers
grew;

More strange than these, a human dwelling
rose,

Inhabitated, tho' rudely built and thatched,
With signs of cultivation near each door.

From either entrance, onward led a path
Unto a garden, parted all the way
By trellis-work, vine-covered thickly o'er.
Above a wilting plant old Kappa bent;
Heard he, surprised and awed, a stranger's
voice.

His dim eyes failed to read the once known
face,

Till Hudiken, in tender greeting spoke.

" At last, thy son brings tidings from on
High."

Eight times the seasons now had come and
gone,

Eight years had Zilra a foul leper been;

Eight years had Talmon bravely toiled and
prayed,

Since he life's prospects freely sacrificed.

At first, for many months the girl was wild,

Made frantic with heart misery and pain;

She wept by day and in her troubled sleep

Clung to the fluted columns of her home,

Or raised weak arms to clasp her mother's
neck;

Oft falling into blank despair again,

When glimmering reason did the truth unveil.

Plight piteous! Poor Talmon's pleading
prayers,

Ascending hour by hour, at length were heard,
For God is merciful, as He is just.

Not without struggle was the victory won;
By nature proud, his will revolted oft;

“ My Saviour, often have I longed to die;
But oh! not thus! Yea, I have coveted
The martyr's crown, but not the leper's
garb.”

Then he remembered how his Lord had prayed,
And when the dread disease attacked him too,
An inward grace accompanied the blight,
With love submissive to his Father's will.

Her reason, after this, the girl regained,
And partly fathomed his heroic deed:
What power had nerved her brother's soul
like steel?

Could his deep love for her outweigh all else?
In silence on this thought she pondered long,
On lowly pallet resting. “ Bresca, here!
Call thou my brother.” Smiling, Talmon
came.

“ My father loved me, yet he drove me forth;
Why didst thou follow to this dreadful place,

Only to wear my curse? ” “ Because I serve
A Master dear, whose law is charity.

Sister, canst thou recall my dreams of yore,
Beneath the olive trees? ” “ I do recall.”

“ Rest easy now and I will soon reveal,
The secrets I then promised thou shouldst
hear.”

When evening came he sat beside the maid
And told the story of a Saviour’s love,
With slow solemnity befitting truth.

Her soul caught fire from his ardor pure;
What he had *done*, was his best argument;
And as her human love led on to God,
Grace worked its wonders in her child-like
heart.

She stilled her weeping, checked her sighs
with prayer,

Prayer for one grace; she only feared to die,
Before the sacred tide made clean her soul.

So was that twilight in the desert glad,
It brought the hopeful hour. In sack-cloth
clad

Stood little Zilra, at the font prepared;
With clustering brown hair her brow still
veiled,

Sole unchanged relic of the sunny past;
Her face—a mother’s eye could scarcely know.
“ My child, by power divine, the holy stream
Can instant heal thy soul and body too.
Wouldst thou, to-day, be made all whole and
clean? ”

“ Oh! cleanse my soul, as white as lambkin’s
fleece;
My worthless body keeps that soul from
God;

Let it decay. For Talmon I will plead.”
Then o’er her fevered brow the deacon poured,
The blessed flood, while God from Heaven
filled

That child-like spirit with a tide of grace.
O Zilra, beautiful no more, but blest!
Angels, not men, are smiling now on thee!
The first pale stars came out and multiplied,
Before the solemn rites and prayers were
done;

For there was joy, too, for the faithful slaves
Made Christians on this holy, happy night,
With Talmon and with Zilra of one Fold.
A peaceful rest, and when the morning broke
Dear Zilra softly called: “ Of thee, I dreamed,

My brother. Thou wert loved and honored
much,

Where once we dwelt—the lord in that abode."

" Our nearest home is Heaven, sister dear."

" Nearest for *me*, in truth, but God designs
Some mission, on this earth, for thee; go
thou,

With Julius, here, unto the city walls,
And 'neath the great Apostle's shadow there
Thou shalt a healing find; so God intends."

" Praised be His holy Name, then I will
go."

At sunset by the city's eastern walls,
A leper stood, meek waiting for his cure,
None other than our Talmon from the waste.
A saint raised his anointed hands aloft
In supplication for the sufferer.

The hideous scales fell off and left the youth
His manly strength and vigor full restored.
Talmon gave thanks with thrill of holy joy,
And sought again his silent, desert home,
There to abide with Zilra to the end;
Although his princely house was very nigh,
Not e'en his eyes turned lingering that way.
She felt no envy at her brother's cure,

But murmured sweetly: “ Now, I pass with
joy,
And when I sleep, go thou to Antioch.”
Before another year had slipped away,
Beside the desert hermitage she slept.

One quiet evening when the winds sang low,
And fire-flies flickered in the darkening green,
Three youthful forms were playing in the
court,

About the mercer’s home. An aged pair
Sat peacefully beneath that vestibule,
And spoke of other days and blasted hopes,
With resignation tempering their words.

“ Our hopes in Heaven are firmly rooted
now;

There we shall realize God’s bounteous love.”

“ Taste, even here, its sweetness,” said a voice,
And Talmon stood before them. Happy hour;
’Twas like a foretaste of rich, heavenly bliss
To which alone they looked for happiness.

Unfelt, forgotten was past misery,

In this glad restoration, unforeseen.

How hung they o’er that sweet and mournful
tale

Of their fair daughter's saintly life and death.
To them he grew a hundred-fold more dear,
For that brave, virtual sacrifice of life.

Long, peaceful years close knitted all their
 hearts.

They tell us, ever after, o'er that house
A white-winged angel, hovering at dusk
Held wide bright arms as if in benison.
Men felt a blest composure as they passed,
And called the place the Christian's "House
 of Peace."

So ends our tale; the sequel Heaven reserves.

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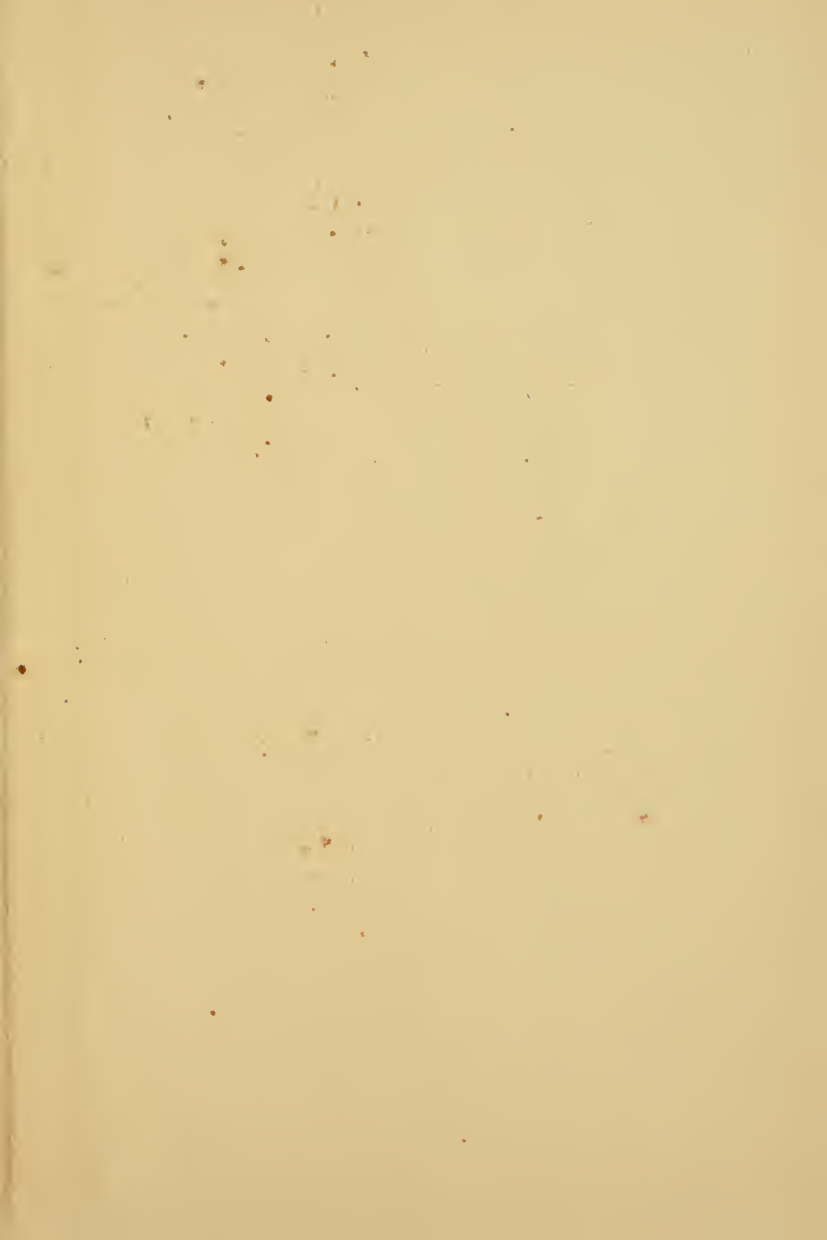
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